
ESEA Flexibility

Request for Window 3



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INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) is offering each State educational agency (SEA) the opportunity to request flexibility on behalf of itself, its local educational agencies (LEAs), and its schools, in order to better focus on improving student learning and increasing the quality of instruction. This voluntary opportunity will provide educators and State and local leaders with flexibility regarding specific requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive State-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction. This flexibility is intended to build on and support the significant State and local reform efforts already underway in critical areas such as transitioning to college- and career-ready standards and assessments; developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support; and evaluating and supporting teacher and principal effectiveness.

The Department invites interested SEAs to request this flexibility pursuant to the authority in section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), which allows the Secretary to waive, with certain exceptions, any statutory or regulatory requirement of the ESEA for an SEA that receives funds under a program authorized by the ESEA and requests a waiver. Under this flexibility, the Department would grant waivers through the 2014–2015 school year.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF REQUESTS

The Department will use a review process that will include both external peer reviewers and staff reviewers to evaluate SEA requests for this flexibility. This review process will help ensure that each request for this flexibility approved by the Department is consistent with the principles described in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, which are designed to support State efforts to improve student academic achievement and increase the quality of instruction, and is both educationally and technically sound. Reviewers will evaluate whether and how each request for this flexibility will support a comprehensive and coherent set of improvements in the areas of standards and assessments, accountability, and teacher and principal effectiveness that will lead to improved student outcomes. Each SEA will have an opportunity, if necessary, to clarify its plans for peer and staff reviewers and to answer any questions reviewers may have. The peer reviewers will then provide comments to the Department. Taking those comments into consideration, the Secretary will make a decision regarding each SEA's request for this flexibility. If an SEA's request for this flexibility is not granted, reviewers and the Department will provide feedback to the SEA about the components of the SEA's request that need additional development in order for the request to be approved.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

An SEA seeking approval to implement this flexibility must submit a high-quality request that addresses all aspects of the principles and waivers and, in each place where a plan is required, includes a high-quality plan. Consistent with ESEA section 9401(d)(1), the Secretary intends to grant waivers that are included in this flexibility through the end of the 2014–2015 school year for SEAs that request the flexibility in “Window 3” (*i.e.*, the September 2012 submission window for peer review in October 2012). The Department is asking SEAs to submit requests that include plans through the 2014–2015 school year in order to provide a complete picture of the SEA’s reform efforts. The Department will not accept a request that meets only some of the principles of this flexibility.

This *ESEA Flexibility Request for Window 3* is intended for use by SEAs requesting ESEA flexibility in September 2012 for peer review in October 2012. The timelines incorporated into this request reflect the timelines for the waivers, key principles, and action items of ESEA flexibility for an SEA that is requesting flexibility in this third window.

High-Quality Request: A high-quality request for this flexibility is one that is comprehensive and coherent in its approach, and that clearly indicates how this flexibility will help an SEA and its LEAs improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students.

A high-quality request will (1) if an SEA has already met a principle, provide a description of how it has done so, including evidence as required; and (2) if an SEA has not yet met a principle, describe how it will meet the principle on the required timelines, including any progress to date. For example, an SEA that has not adopted minimum guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with Principle 3 by the time it submits its request for the flexibility will need to provide a plan demonstrating that it will do so by the end of the 2012–2013 school year. In each such case, an SEA’s plan must include, at a minimum, the following elements for each principle that the SEA has not yet met:

1. **Key milestones and activities:** Significant milestones to be achieved in order to meet a given principle, and essential activities to be accomplished in order to reach the key milestones. The SEA should also include any essential activities that have already been completed or key milestones that have already been reached so that reviewers can understand the context for and fully evaluate the SEA’s plan to meet a given principle.
2. **Detailed timeline:** A specific schedule setting forth the dates on which key activities will begin and be completed and milestones will be achieved so that the SEA can meet the principle by the required date.
3. **Party or parties responsible:** Identification of the SEA staff (*e.g.*, position, title, or office) and, as appropriate, others who will be responsible for ensuring that each key activity is accomplished.
4. **Evidence:** Where required, documentation to support the plan and demonstrate the SEA’s progress in implementing the plan. This *ESEA Flexibility Request for Window 3* indicates the specific evidence that the SEA must either include in its request or provide at a future reporting date.

5. Resources: Resources necessary to complete the key activities, including staff time and additional funding.
6. Significant obstacles: Any major obstacles that may hinder completion of key milestones and activities (*e.g.*, State laws that need to be changed) and a plan to overcome them.

Included on page 19 of this document is an example of a format for a table that an SEA may use to submit a plan that is required for any principle of this flexibility that the SEA has not already met. An SEA that elects to use this format may also supplement the table with text that provides an overview of the plan.

An SEA should keep in mind the required timelines for meeting each principle and develop credible plans that allow for completion of the activities necessary to meet each principle. Although the plan for each principle will reflect that particular principle, as discussed above, an SEA should look across all plans to make sure that it puts forward a comprehensive and coherent request for this flexibility.

Preparing the Request: To prepare a high-quality request, it is extremely important that an SEA refer to all of the provided resources, including the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, which includes the principles, definitions, and timelines; the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance for Window 3*, which includes the criteria that will be used by the peer reviewers to determine if the request meets the principles of this flexibility; and the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions*, which provides additional guidance for SEAs in preparing their requests.

As used in this request form, the following terms have the definitions set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*: (1) college- and career-ready standards, (2) focus school, (3) high-quality assessment, (4) priority school, (5) reward school, (6) standards that are common to a significant number of States, (7) State network of institutions of higher education, (8) student growth, and (9) turnaround principles.

Each request must include:

- A table of contents and a list of attachments, using the forms on pages 1 and 2.
- The cover sheet (p. 3), waivers requested (p. 4-6), and assurances (p. 7-8).
- A description of how the SEA has met the consultation requirements (p. 9).
- Evidence and plans to meet the principles (p. 10-18). An SEA will enter narrative text in the text boxes provided, complete the required tables, and provide other required evidence. An SEA may supplement the narrative text in a text box with attachments, which will be included in an appendix. Any supplemental attachments that are included in an appendix must be referenced in the related narrative text.

Requests should not include personally identifiable information.

Process for Submitting the Request: An SEA must submit a request to the Department to receive the flexibility. This request form and other pertinent documents are available on the Department's Web site at: <http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility>.

Electronic Submission: The Department strongly prefers to receive an SEA's request for the flexibility electronically. The SEA should submit it to the following address:
ESEAflexibility@ed.gov.

Paper Submission: In the alternative, an SEA may submit the original and two copies of its request for the flexibility to the following address:

Paul S. Brown, Acting Director
Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 3W320
Washington, DC 20202-6132

Due to potential delays in processing mail sent through the U.S. Postal Service, SEAs are encouraged to use alternate carriers for paper submissions.

REQUEST SUBMISSION DEADLINE

The submission due date for Window 3 is September 6, 2012.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR SEAS

The Department has conducted a number of webinars to assist SEAs in preparing their requests and to respond to questions. Please visit the Department's Web site at:
<http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility> for copies of previously conducted webinars and information on upcoming webinars.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions, please contact the Department by e-mail at ESEAflexibility@ed.gov.

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For each attachment included in the *ESEA Flexibility Request for Window 3*, label the attachment with the corresponding number from the list of attachments below and indicate the page number where the attachment is located. If an attachment is not applicable to the SEA's request, indicate "N/A" instead of a page number. Reference relevant attachments in the narrative portions of the request.

LABEL	LIST OF ATTACHMENTS (WEBSITE LINKS)	PAGE
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COVER SHEET FOR ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST

Legal Name of Requester:	Requester's Mailing Addr	
State Contact for the ESEA Flexibility Request Name Position and Office: Contact's Mailing Address Telephone Fax Email address		
Chief State Officer Printed Name):		Teleph
Signature of Chief State Officer		Date
The State, through its authorized representative, agrees to meet all principles of the ESEA Flexibility.		

WAIVERS

By submitting this flexibility request, the SEA requests flexibility through waivers of the ten ESEA requirements listed below and their associated regulatory, administrative, and reporting requirements by checking each of the boxes below. The provisions below represent the general areas of flexibility requested; a chart appended to the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions* enumerates each specific provision of which the SEA requests a waiver, which the SEA incorporates into its request by reference.

- ☒ 1. The requirements in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(E)-(H) that prescribe how an SEA must establish annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for determining adequate yearly progress (AYP) to ensure that all students meet or exceed the State's proficient level of academic achievement on the State's assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics no later than the end of the 2013–2014 school year. The SEA requests this waiver to develop new ambitious but achievable AMOs in reading/language arts and mathematics in order to provide meaningful goals that are used to guide support and improvement efforts for the State, LEAs, schools, and student subgroups.
- ☒ 2. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(b) for an LEA to identify for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, as appropriate, a Title I school that fails, for two consecutive years or more, to make AYP, and for a school so identified and its LEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA and its Title I schools need not comply with these requirements.
- ☒ 3. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(c) for an SEA to identify for improvement or corrective action, as appropriate, an LEA that, for two consecutive years or more, fails to make AYP, and for an LEA so identified and its SEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that it need not comply with these requirements with respect to its LEAs.
- ☒ 4. The requirements in ESEA sections 6213(b) and 6224(e) that limit participation in, and use of funds under the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) and Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) programs based on whether an LEA has made AYP and is complying with the requirements in ESEA section 1116. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA that receives SRSA or RLIS funds may use those funds for any authorized purpose regardless of whether the LEA makes AYP.
- ☒ 5. The requirement in ESEA section 1114(a)(1) that a school have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more in order to operate a schoolwide program. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA may implement interventions consistent with the turnaround principles or interventions that are based on the needs of the students in the school and designed to enhance the entire educational program in a school in any of its priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of “priority schools” and “focus schools,” respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, as appropriate, even if those schools do not have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more.
- ☒ 6. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that

section only to LEAs with schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs in order to serve any of the State’s priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of “priority schools” and “focus schools,” respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

- ☒ 7. The provision in ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) that authorizes an SEA to reserve Title I, Part A funds to reward a Title I school that (1) significantly closed the achievement gap between subgroups in the school; or (2) has exceeded AYP for two or more consecutive years. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may use funds reserved under ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) for any of the State’s reward schools that meet the definition of “reward schools” set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.
- ☒ 8. The requirements in ESEA section 2141(a), (b), and (c) for an LEA and SEA to comply with certain requirements for improvement plans regarding highly qualified teachers. The SEA requests this waiver to allow the SEA and its LEAs to focus on developing and implementing more meaningful evaluation and support systems.
- ☒ 9. The limitations in ESEA section 6123 that limit the amount of funds an SEA or LEA may transfer from certain ESEA programs to other ESEA programs. The SEA requests this waiver so that it and its LEAs may transfer up to 100 percent of the funds it receives under the authorized programs among those programs and into Title I, Part A.
- ☒ 10. The requirements in ESEA section 1003(g)(4) and the definition of a Tier I school in Section I.A.3 of the School Improvement Grants (SIG) final requirements. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may award SIG funds to an LEA to implement one of the four SIG models in any of the State’s priority schools that meet the definition of “priority schools” set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

Optional Flexibilities:

If an SEA chooses to request waivers of any of the following requirements, it should check the corresponding box(es) below:

- ☒ 11. The requirements in ESEA sections 4201(b)(1)(A) and 4204(b)(2)(A) that restrict the activities provided by a community learning center under the Twenty-First Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program to activities provided only during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (*i.e.*, before and after school or during summer recess). The SEA requests this waiver so that 21st CCLC funds may be used to support expanded learning time during the school day in addition to activities during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session.
- ☒ 12. The requirements in ESEA sections 1116(a)(1)(A)-(B) and 1116(c)(1)(A) that require LEAs and SEAs to make determinations of adequate yearly progress (AYP) for schools and LEAs, respectively. The SEA requests this waiver because continuing to determine whether an LEA and its schools make AYP is inconsistent with the SEA’s State-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system included in its ESEA flexibility request. The SEA and its LEAs must report on their report cards performance against the AMOs for all

subgroups identified in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v), and use performance against the AMOs to support continuous improvement in Title I schools.

- ☒ 13. The requirements in ESEA section 1113(a)(3)-(4) and (c)(1) that require an LEA to serve eligible schools under Title I in rank order of poverty and to allocate Title I, Part A funds based on that rank ordering. The SEA requests this waiver in order to permit its LEAs to serve a Title I-eligible high school with a graduation rate below 60 percent that the SEA has identified as a priority school even if that school does not otherwise rank sufficiently high to be served under ESEA section 1113.

ASSURANCES

By submitting this request, the SEA assures that:

- ☒ 1. It requests waivers of the above-referenced requirements based on its agreement to meet Principles 1 through 4 of the flexibility, as described throughout the remainder of this request.
- ☒ 2. It will adopt English language proficiency (ELP) standards that correspond to the State's college- and career-ready standards, consistent with the requirement in ESEA section 3113(b)(2), and that reflect the academic language skills necessary to access and meet the new college- and career-ready standards, no later than the 2013–2014 school year. (Principle 1)
- ☒ 3. It will develop and administer no later than the 2014–2015 school year alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities that are consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2) and are aligned with the State's college- and career-ready standards. (Principle 1)
- ☒ 4. It will develop and administer ELP assessments aligned with the State's ELP standards, consistent with the requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(7), 3113(b)(2), and 3122(a)(3)(A)(ii). (Principle 1)
- ☒ 5. It will report annually to the public on college-going and college credit-accumulation rates for all students and subgroups of students in each LEA and each public high school in the State. (Principle 1)
- ☒ 6. If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and uses achievement on those assessments to identify priority and focus schools, it has technical documentation, which can be made available to the Department upon request, demonstrating that the assessments are administered statewide; include all students, including by providing appropriate accommodations for English Learners and students with disabilities, as well as alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2); and are valid and reliable for use in the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. (Principle 2)
- ☒ 7. It will report to the public its lists of reward schools, priority schools, and focus schools at the time the SEA is approved to implement the flexibility, and annually thereafter, it will publicly recognize its reward schools as well as make public its lists of priority and focus schools if it chooses to update those lists. (Principle 2)
- ☒ 8. Prior to submitting this request, it provided student growth data on their current students and the students they taught in the previous year to, at a minimum, all teachers of reading/language arts and mathematics in grades in which the State administers assessments in those subjects in a manner that is timely and informs instructional programs, or it will do so no later than the deadline required under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. (Principle 3)

- ☒ 9. It will evaluate and, based on that evaluation, revise its own administrative requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools. (Principle 4)
- ☒ 10. It has consulted with its Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in its request.
- ☒ 11. Prior to submitting this request, it provided all LEAs with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on the request and has attached a copy of that notice (Attachment 1) as well as copies of any comments it received from LEAs (Attachment 2).
- ☒ 12. Prior to submitting this request, it provided notice and information regarding the request to the public in the manner in which the State customarily provides such notice and information to the public (*e.g.*, by publishing a notice in the newspaper; by posting information on its website) and has attached a copy of, or link to, that notice (Attachment 3).
- ☒ 13. It will provide to the Department, in a timely manner, all required reports, data, and evidence regarding its progress in implementing the plans contained throughout this request.
- ☒ 14. It will report annually on its State report card, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report on their local report cards, for the “all students” group and for each subgroup described in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II): information on student achievement at each proficiency level; data comparing actual achievement levels to the State’s annual measurable objectives; the percentage of students not tested; performance on the other academic indicator for elementary and middle schools; and graduation rates for high schools. It will also annually report, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report, all other information and data required by ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C) and 1111(h)(2)(B), respectively.

If the SEA selects Option A in section 3.A of its request, indicating that it has not yet developed and adopted all the guidelines for teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, it must also assure that:

- ☒ 15. It will submit to the Department for peer review and approval a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2012–2013 school year. (Principle 3)

CONSULTATION

An SEA must meaningfully engage and solicit input from diverse stakeholders and communities in the development of its request. To demonstrate that an SEA has done so, the SEA must provide an assurance that it has consulted with the State's Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in the request and provide the following:

1. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from teachers and their representatives.

General Consultation Assurances

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI), on behalf of the State of North Dakota, prepared this ESEA Flexibility Waiver request in a manner that engaged and solicited input from the state's diverse stakeholders and education community representatives. The NDDPI asserts that it consulted with and incorporated the advice and recommendations of the state's various advisory committees, including the state's Title I Committee of Practitioners, regarding the general design and programmatic specifications of this Application.

ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee

On September 30, 2011, following the September 28, 2011 release of the ESEA Flexibility Waiver Application by the U.S. Department of Education, the State Superintendent formed the North Dakota State Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Reauthorization Planning Committee (hereafter, the ESEA Planning Committee) to provide general guidance to the State Superintendent regarding the overall design and operational plan for the state's ESEA waiver application. The ESEA Planning Committee consists of approximately twenty different statewide education community representatives, which are inclusive of a wide variety of diverse stakeholders. The ESEA Planning Committee's membership includes representatives from the following list of elected officials, agencies, educational organizations, statewide advisory committees, and national and regional technical assistance centers. The following list constitutes the membership of the ESEA Planning Committee:

- Office of the Governor;
- North Dakota State Senate;
- North Dakota House of Representatives;
- North Dakota Department of Public Instruction;
- North Dakota University System;
- North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education;
- North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission;
- North Dakota School Boards Association;
- North Dakota Education Association;
- North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders;
- North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board;
- Pathfinders Parent Center
- North Dakota Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Advisory Committee;
- North Dakota Title I Committee of Practitioners;
- North Dakota Curriculum Initiative;

- North Dakota English Language Learners;
- North Dakota Education Technology Council;
- North Dakota Regional Education Associations;
- North Dakota Small Organized Schools;
- North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council;
- North Dakota School Study Council;
- North Dakota Child Protection Services;
- North Dakota Chamber of Commerce;
- At-large Education Leaders;
- North Central Comprehensive Center;
- Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning;
- National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality

Refer to Attachment 2 for a complete listing of the agencies and representatives which constituted the ESEA Planning Committee's membership.

Each of these representative entities were invited to engage in discussions regarding the advisability of the state to apply for an ESEA flexibility request and to prepare the state's ESEA flexibility waiver application, in the event of a favorable recommendation, in a manner that would meet the overall educational goals and values of their respective memberships. These representative groups included those various teacher associations, teacher advisory committees, curricular development associations, educational leadership associations, and other educational special populations associations that have historically served the state in a wide variety of policy and program analysis activities.

The ESEA Planning Committee convened formally on the following dates to review the Department's flexibility guidance, to develop proposals to meet each of the flexibility request's assurances and principles, and to prepare a general recommendation to the State Superintendent whether the state should proceed with a formal flexibility waiver application.

- October 14, 2011;
- October 26, 2011;
- December 5, 2011;
- February 8, 2012;
- August 15, 2012.

The NDDPI established an official website for the posting of all ESEA Flexibility Request documents and events, including ESEA Planning Committee meeting materials. Refer to the following website: <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/ESEA/waivers.shtm>. Among the materials included within this ESEA Flexibility Request website are the following:

- the agenda for all ESEA Planning Committee meetings;
- the membership roster for the ESEA Planning Committee, including contact information;
- working drafts of the state's ESEA flexibility request responses to the various assurances and principles;
- the membership roster of the ESEA Planning Committee's designated subcommittee on teacher and principal evaluations;
- the agenda for the various teacher and principal evaluation subcommittee's study meetings;

- the listing of various support research and materials referenced by the teacher and principal evaluation subcommittee;
- the listing of Department guidance and support materials, including various presentations, webinars, and documentation regarding the ESEA flexibility request;
- foundational Department guidance materials regarding the legal status of the ESEA flexibility request; and
- various external websites, which provide additional technical assistance regarding the ESEA flexibility request.

The NDDPI posted important ESEA flexibility request information and updates, via electronic memoranda, to local schools and school districts.

Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support System Subcommittee

In the process of conducting its analysis regarding the advisability of the state to submit an ESEA flexibility request application, the ESEA Planning Committee identified Principle 3, regarding teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, as an especially challenging issue that would require the concentrated study of a subcommittee. During its October 26, 2011 committee meeting, the ESEA Planning Committee formed and constituted the Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support System (TPESS) Subcommittee. The TPESS Subcommittee was formed to conduct a comprehensive review of current reputable research, recognized national models, statewide administrative practices, and local sentiments regarding the design and implementation of various teacher and principal evaluation efforts. The TPESS Subcommittee consisted of selected members of the ESEA Planning Committee, in addition to nominated statewide members who represented teachers, principals, superintendents, higher education representatives, and legislators. The NDDPI provided facilitation for the meetings. Representatives from the North Central Comprehensive Center and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality provided technical assistance to the TPESS Subcommittee.

The TPESS Subcommittee established a research-based approach to the analysis of teacher and principal evaluations and the support system that would be required to successfully ensure the deployment of a statewide system, if the state were to advance an ESEA flexibility request application or if the state elected not to advance any application but sought to independently pursue a statewide teacher and principal evaluation initiative. The TPESS Subcommittee formed internal work groups that concentrated on individual components of a statewide effort, including various research-based evaluation models, administrative practices, and support requirements, including professional development. The TPESS Subcommittee conducted its analysis and drafting responsibilities at the following formal meeting dates:

- November 22, 2011
- December 14, 2011
- February 21, 2012
- April 3, 2012
- May 8, 2012
- June 6, 2012
- July 25, 2012

The record of TPESS Subcommittee proceedings was posted on the NDDPI's ESEA Planning Committee website. Refer to the following website:

<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/ESEA/waivers.shtm>. Among the materials included within this TPESS Subcommittee website are the following:

- the agenda for all TPESS Subcommittee meetings;
- the membership roster for the TPESS Subcommittee, including contact information;
- working drafts of prospective teacher and principal evaluation guidelines; and
- the listing of various support research and materials referenced by the TPESS Subcommittee.

At its February 8, 2012 meeting, the ESEA Planning Committee reached fundamental agreement with the various provisions within Principles 1 and 2 of the ESEA Flexibility Request Application. The ESEA Planning Committee also received a summary report of the progress of the TPESS Subcommittee regarding its work concerning Principle 3 and determined that sufficient progress had been made by the Subcommittee to continue its preparation of a proposal for a statewide teacher evaluation guideline document and a statewide principal evaluation guideline document. The State Superintendent received this recommendation and elected to delay any determination of the state to submit an ESEA flexibility request application until September 6, 2012, pending the final guideline drafts of the TPESS Subcommittee and the final review and recommendation of the ESEA Planning Committee. The TPESS Subcommittee subsequently continued its work through July 25, 2012, when the final drafts of the *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* were completed. Refer to Attachment 10 to review the *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines*. The TPESS Subcommittee unanimously approved the contents and presentation of these evaluation guidelines documents and requested that the NDDPI and the representatives of the ESEA Planning Committee forward this recommendation to the full body of the ESEA Planning Committee for acceptance and further consideration regarding any state ESEA Flexibility Request Application.

Statewide Communications and Conference Presentations

The various ESEA Planning Committee members, who represented the wide variety of statewide education stakeholder groups, prepared and provided information and updates to their respective memberships on the progress of the ESEA Planning Committee's deliberations. This communication included newsletters, electronic memoranda, statewide conferences, and individual communications with constituent members. The NDDPI provided information and updates through monthly Title I and special education statewide newsletters, the statewide Title I teacher and administrator conference, scheduled statewide and regional administrators' conferences, and individualized technical assistance communications.

The ESEA Planning Committee accessed and readily referenced documents and recommendations forthcoming from the statewide North Dakota Curriculum Initiative (NDCI) regarding the adoption and implementation of the Common Core State Standards as the state's official content standards in English language arts and mathematics. The NDCI is a statewide collaborative of educators dedicated to standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment educational practices. The NDCI, with the assistance of the NDDPI, convened 70 statewide content and instructional specialists, including teachers, administrators, and higher education representatives, to develop curricular guidance and transitional strategies required for the successful implementation of the state's new Common Core State Standards.

The NDCI expanded its advisory structure to support the state's overall efforts to implement the Common Core State Standards by establishing five operational subcommittees whose memberships allow for specialized implementation strategies. These subcommittees include the following:

- Representatives from the state's eight Regional Education Associations, including support for the state's small organized schools;
- Representatives from the State Study Council, an association of the state's largest school districts;
- Representatives from the state's institutions of higher education;
- Representatives from career and technical education centers; and
- Representatives from certain education stakeholder associations.

The membership of the ESEA Planning Committee, including its teacher and principal evaluation subcommittee, and the structure of its meeting and communications outreach efforts are designed to provide for an effective and efficient means of addressing the various provisions of the ESEA Flexibility Request and to allow for the appropriate and timely communication of activities to the various stakeholder constituents.

ESEA Planning Committee's Final Recommendation Regarding the State's ESEA Flexibility Request Application

On August 15, 2012, the ESEA Planning Committee reviewed the recommendations of the TPESS Subcommittee and accepted the *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* as supporting documentation to the state's response to Principle 3 within the ESEA Flexibility Request Application. With the contents of each Principle of the ESEA Flexibility Request Application completed, the ESEA Planning Committee subsequently reviewed each individual Principle and the integrity of the state's composite Application for final consideration and recommendation to the State Superintendent.

Following the Committee's deliberations, members considered the motion to recommend to the State Superintendent that the NDDPI proceed with its submission of the state's ESEA Flexibility Request Application, following a designated final public comment period and necessary final editing. Each Committee member voted individually. The recorded tally of votes reported that a majority of ESEA Planning Committee members recommended the submission of the state's ESEA Flexibility Request Application. The NDDPI received this recommendation and proceeded to post the ESEA Planning Committee's ESEA Flexibility Request Application framework draft for public comment. The NDDPI proceeded to incorporate final edits to the ESEA Planning Committee's Application framework draft to reflect the intentions of the ESEA Planning Committee regarding content and to include and validate internal document references. Following the receipt of all public comments and any subsequent revisions, the final draft of the state's ESEA Flexibility Request Application was forwarded to the State Superintendent for final consideration and disposition.

Public Comment

Following the August 15, 2012 proceedings of the ESEA Planning Committee, the NDDPI posted the ESEA Planning Committee's framework draft of the state's ESEA Flexibility Request Application on the NDDPI website. A general public press release announced the posting of the Application and invited the submission of any and all comments regarding the Application's

contents and the state's submission of the Application. A memorandum announcing the posting of the Application and the invitation to submit public comments was also forwarded to all public schools and school districts statewide. Refer to Attachment 3 to review these public comment notifications. Following the receipt of all public comments received by September 1, 2012, the NDDPI posted all received comments on the NDDPI website and considered the contents of these comments for possible inclusion in the final draft of the state's ESEA Flexibility Request Application. Refer to Attachment 2 to review all public comments received through September 1, 2012.

2. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from other diverse communities, such as students, parents, community-based organizations, civil rights organizations, organizations representing students with disabilities and English Learners, business organizations, and Indian tribes.

On September 30, 2011, following the September 28, 2011 release of the ESEA Flexibility Waiver Application by the U.S. Department of Education, the State Superintendent formed the North Dakota State Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Reauthorization Planning Committee (hereafter, the ESEA Planning Committee) to provide general guidance to the State Superintendent regarding the overall design and operational plan for the state's ESEA waiver application. The ESEA Planning Committee consists of approximately twenty different statewide education community representatives, which are inclusive of a wide variety of diverse stakeholders. The ESEA Planning Committee's membership includes representatives from the following list of elected officials, agencies, educational organizations, statewide advisory committees, and national and regional technical assistance centers. Included within the balance of the Committee's representatives are associations that represent civic and business interests, civil rights interests, students with disabilities and English language learners, parents, and local school boards. Among the following list that constituted the membership of the ESEA Planning Committee are groups that represent and advocate on behalf of these divergent interests (bolded for emphasis):

- Office of the Governor;
- North Dakota State Senate;
- North Dakota House of Representatives;
- North Dakota Department of Public Instruction;
- North Dakota University System;
- North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education;
- **North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission;**
- **North Dakota School Boards Association;**
- North Dakota Education Association;
- North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders;
- North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board;
- **Pathfinders Parent Center**
- **North Dakota Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Advisory Committee;**
- North Dakota Title I Committee of Practitioners;
- North Dakota Curriculum Initiative;
- **North Dakota English Language Learners;**

- North Dakota Education Technology Council;
- North Dakota Regional Education Associations;
- North Dakota Small Organized Schools;
- **North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council;**
- North Dakota School Study Council;
- **North Dakota Child Protection Services;**
- **North Dakota Chamber of Commerce;**
- At-large Education Leaders;
- North Central Comprehensive Center;
- Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning;
- National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality

Refer to Attachment 2 for a complete listing of the agencies and representatives which constituted the ESEA Planning Committee's membership.

Each of these representative entities were invited to engage in discussions regarding the advisability of the state to apply for an ESEA flexibility request and to prepare the state's ESEA flexibility waiver application, in the event of a favorable recommendation, in a manner that would meet the overall educational goals and values of their respective memberships.

Public Comment

Following the August 15, 2012 proceedings of the ESEA Planning Committee, the NDDPI posted the ESEA Planning Committee's framework draft of the state's ESEA Flexibility Request Application on the NDDPI website. A general public press release announced the posting of the Application and invited the submission of any and all comments regarding the Application's contents and the state's submission of the Application. A memorandum announcing the posting of the Application and the invitation to submit public comments was also forwarded to all public schools and school districts statewide. Refer to Attachment 3 to review these public comment notifications. Following the receipt of all public comments received by September 1, 2012, the NDDPI posted all received comments on the NDDPI website and considered the contents of these comments for possible inclusion in the final draft of the state's ESEA Flexibility Request Application. Refer to Attachment 2 to review all public comments received through September 1, 2012.

EVALUATION

The Department encourages an SEA that receives approval to implement the flexibility to collaborate with the Department to evaluate at least one program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs implement under principle 1, 2, or 3. Upon receipt of approval of the flexibility, an interested SEA will need to nominate for evaluation a program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs will implement under principles 1, 2, or 3. The Department will work with the SEA to determine the feasibility and design of the evaluation and, if it is determined to be feasible and appropriate, will fund and conduct the evaluation in partnership with the SEA, ensuring that the implementation of the chosen program, practice, or strategy is consistent with the evaluation design.

☒ Check here if you are interested in collaborating with the Department in this evaluation, if your request for the flexibility is approved.

OVERVIEW OF SEA'S REQUEST FOR THE ESEA FLEXIBILITY

Provide an overview (about 500 words) of the SEA's request for the flexibility that:

1. explains the SEA's comprehensive approach to implement the waivers and principles and describes the SEA's strategy to ensure this approach is coherent within and across the principles; and
2. describes how the implementation of the waivers and principles will enhance the SEA's and its LEAs' ability to increase the quality of instruction for students and improve student achievement.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) submits this Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Request Application for Window 3 (henceforth titled Application) in accordance with the associated regulatory, administrative, and reporting requirements specified within official guidance issued by the Secretary, as authorized under section 9401 of the No Child Left Behind Act. This Application is submitted under the approval of Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead, North Dakota State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the state's statutory authority, on behalf of the state, its local educational agencies, and its schools. The NDDPI provides assurances that this Application is complete, specifies the flexibility waivers sought by the state, and stipulates to the assurances and the state's proposals required as a condition to any consideration and subsequent approval. The NDDPI respectfully requests that the U.S. Department of Education (ED) review and consider the flexibility provisions specified within this Application and proceed under the terms of the ESEA Flexibility Request for Window 3 to approve this Application.

The Context for this Flexibility Application

The NDDPI submits this Application within the context of certain political, economic, and educational realities that underscore the necessity to implement meaningful flexibilities at this time. Since the enactment of the NCLB, the Nation has moved steadily to adopt and implement state content and achievement standards, valid and reliable standards-based assessments, accountability reporting that provides the public with an array of achievement measures, adequate yearly progress and program improvement designations for schools and districts, increased highly qualified teacher requirements, certain educational improvement support services for designated subgroups of students, dedicated programming for specified issues, among other initiatives. Congress has authorized and allocated funding to meet evolving priorities, which have been punctuated and impacted by military conflict, national threats to security, economic stressors and recession, and a growing national debt. These conditions have forced certain funding restrictions in social programs nationwide, including education.

A decade has passed since the enactment of NCLB. As dictated by the mathematical realities inherent within the accountability provisions of NCLB, an ever-increasing number of schools and districts, have been identified under the provisions of adequate yearly progress and program improvement. The requisite remediation actions required under these increased

identifications have been impeded by funding limitations, effectively creating impassés in improvement activities and frustrations among educators. During this time, Congress has not reauthorized ESEA; the ESEA, which has been traditionally reauthorized every five years, remains unaltered a decade later. The burdens of an unattended law compounded by funding limitations have strained the capacity of states and schools to achieve the law's desired aims. The good will and faith of educators and communities have been compromised.

The ESEA Flexibility Request issued by ED provides a means to seek certain flexibilities from the more stringent provisions of NCLB, as a means of mitigating these contextual challenges. As such, the ESEA Flexibility Request offers remedies within the constraints of the law. The NDDPI is mindful of the purpose and potential of this Flexibility Request and seeks to benefit from its design and effect. The NDDPI is also mindful that the Congress will eventually reauthorize the ESEA, at a time and in a manner yet unknown. When it is eventually reauthorized, the ESEA will emerge with a renewed attention to perceived national priorities, which may or may not align with the outlined provisions of the Flexibility Request.

In the presence of these swirling uncertainties, the NDDPI and its committees of statewide education stakeholders have charted a carefully balanced course of action: a course that proposes meaningful yet carefully structured educational reforms that advance the state's longer term best interests without introducing accountability provisions that might encounter conflict with a future reauthorized ESEA. These proposals seek to optimize reform benefits, properly balance a respect for local control, and remove the prospects of introducing harm to the schools and communities of the state.

The NDDPI submits this Application to receive flexibility for certain provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), as specified by the waiver guidance issued by the Secretary. The NDDPI seeks flexibility from the provisions specified herein in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive state-developed plans to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction. In recent years, the state has advanced certain educational reforms that have arisen from statewide discussions among teachers, administrators, policymakers, various education associations, and the public. These recent statewide reform efforts, when combined with the flexibility sought by this Application, provide the state with a meaningful means of advancing three core policy initiatives:

- establishing credible college- and career-ready standards and assessments to ensure that all students succeed in life;
- developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support to ensure that all students are provided high-quality educational opportunities within all schools; and
- supporting effective instruction and leadership to ensure that every student benefits from qualified and effective teachers and leaders.

The flexibility proposals presented in this Application are the result of the extensive collaboration of a statewide network of education stakeholders. This collaborative effort among representatives of agencies, school districts, education associations, and other interests underscores the degree of commitment to advance meaningful education reforms that represent the state's deeply held values and aspirations. On behalf of this statewide

collaborative, the NDDPI provides assurances that the state will administer the provisions of this Application to achieve the outcomes sought in each of its three stated aims.

Establishing credible college- and career-ready standards.

This Application stipulates within Principle 1 that the state has adopted new content standards in English language arts and mathematics that are based on the Common Core State Standards, nationally developed and recognized, rigorous college- and career-readiness standards. The state has developed content alignment studies, or gap analysis studies, that provide a direct aid to local schools in their effort to understand the evolution of content expectations between the state's older and newly adopted content standards. The state has similarly developed, through the contributions of committees of statewide content specialists, curriculum template supplementary support materials that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards and that provide guidance to local school districts as they adopt new curricula that are fully aligned to the state's new standards.

This Application presents a series of proactive measures designed to assist local schools and educators to transition into and fully implement the state's new content standards based on the Common Core State Standards. This collection of systemic transition and implementation measures includes, among others, the development of a statewide collaborative partners network, under the aegis of the North Dakota Curriculum Initiative, which participates in the planning, development, and delivery of professional development activities and curriculum and assessment development materials; the development of curriculum support materials directed to students with disabilities and English language learners; the provision of special outreach grants and support services for at-risk American Indian students and their communities; the offering of personal, academic, and career counseling to all high school students to advance their prospects of a successful transition into college or their stated career; the statewide administration of interim assessments to students across grade spans and the upgrading of the alignment of these interim assessments to the Common Core State Standards; the statewide administration of the ACT or the WorkKeys assessments to all eleventh graders to prepare students for their successful transition into college or their stated career and to raise understanding of college and career expectations; the coordination of activities among the state's Regional Education Associations to assist local school districts in the development of their local curricula and the provision of professional development; the deployment of a series of statewide higher education initiatives that are designed to improve success of students entering into, moving through, and graduating from college within the state; and the implementation of a series of legislatively mandated education reforms designed to assist schools in developing their locally determined education initiatives.

The NDDPI provides assurances that these related activities provide for an integrated approach to implement meaningful college- and career-readiness among all students statewide. The NDDPI provides further assurance that these initiatives carry a strong probability of succeeding in light of the efforts of the state's various stakeholders to develop these initiatives.

Developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support

This Application presents within Principle 2 a new differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system that is designed to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for all students. The design of this system is to identify low-performing schools and provide intensive support as consistent

with the intent of ESEA Title I law. This proposal specifies the manner in which Priority, Focus, and Reward schools are identified and provided appropriate supports, based on their designation. Within this plan, the NDDPI will prepare and publish annual measureable objective (AMO) reports for each public school in the aggregate and by certain subgroup designations. AMOs are generated based on (1) student achievement in reading and mathematics on the state's annual assessments; (2) student attendance rates in elementary and middle schools, and (3) student graduation rates in high school. Determinations incorporate established reliability rules and will be made independently for each public school in the state. The ESEA Planning Committee elected to set realistic AMOs in annual equal increments toward a goal of reducing by 25% the number of students in the "all students" group and in each subgroup who are not proficient within six years. The Application presents detailed rubrics for the determination of Priority, Focus, and Reward schools. Additionally, the proposal presents the manner in which the state will provide direct technical assistance and school improvement supports regarding established turnaround principles to identified schools to enhance the prospects of their overall improvement in student achievement levels.

The NDDPI provides assurances that these related activities provide for an integrated approach to identify and support the differentiated standing of lower- and higher-performing schools in order to raise overall student achievement statewide. The NDDPI provides further assurance that these initiatives carry a strong probability of succeeding in light of the efforts of the state's various stakeholders to develop these initiatives.

Evaluating and supporting teacher and principal effectiveness.

This Application stipulates within Principle 3 that the state will continue its current development of teacher and principal evaluation guidelines through the 2012-13 academic year, that this process will involve teachers and principals, and that the NDDPI will submit to the ED copies of the guidelines at the completion of the development process. This Application provides detailed narrative regarding the efforts of the state to develop teacher and principal evaluation guidelines and a plan to complete the development process during 2012-13. The Application affixes the substantive body of the state's teacher and principal evaluation guidelines documents, less certain specified support materials which will be developed during 2012-13. These two evaluation guideline documents clearly outline the professional teacher and principal standards upon which evaluations are to be aligned; the manner in which local school districts might adopt certain approved models of evaluation; the administrative protocols that guide local administrators in the conduct of evaluations; the various multiple measures, including consideration of specified student achievement assessments and other measures, to be considered in the process of evaluating teachers and principals; the differentiated levels of performance and the recording of these results; and various considerations regarding the validity, reliability, and transparency of any evaluation programs, including ongoing research regarding the integrity of the evaluation system.

The NDDPI provides assurances that these related activities provide for an integrated approach to the implementation of a valid and reliable statewide teacher and principal evaluations system. The NDDPI provides further assurance that these initiatives carry a strong probability of succeeding in light of the efforts of the state's various stakeholders to develop these initiatives.

The NDDPI, on behalf of its statewide collaborative of education stakeholders, submits this Application with confidence that its provisions reflect well, within the bounds of the Flexibility Request's parameters, the values and best interests of the state to provide to its students an

education grounded on excellence and dedicated to their ultimate success in life.

PRINCIPLE 1: COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

1.A ADOPT COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that are common to a significant number of States, consistent with part (1) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State’s standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)</p>	<p>Option B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that have been approved and certified by a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs), consistent with part (2) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State’s standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)</p> <p>ii. Attach a copy of the memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of IHEs certifying that students who meet these standards will not need remedial coursework at the postsecondary level. (Attachment 5)</p>
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1.B TRANSITION TO COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Provide the SEA’s plan to transition to and implement no later than the 2013–2014 school year college- and career-ready standards statewide in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for all students and schools and include an explanation of how this transition plan is likely to lead to all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, gaining access to and learning content aligned with such standards. The Department encourages an SEA to include in its plan activities related to each of the italicized questions in the corresponding section of the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance for Window 3*, or to explain why one or more of those activities is not necessary to its plan.

The following narrative constitutes the state's plan to transition to and implement college- and career standards statewide and to lead all students, regardless of academic or demographic standing, to gain access to these standards. The narrative addresses the Application's official guidance regarding the following indicators:

- The extent of alignment between the state's current standards and the college- and career-ready standards;
- The state's efforts to analyze the linguistic demands of the state's college- and career-ready standards to inform the development of English language proficiency standards;
- The state's efforts to analyze the learning and accommodation factors necessary to ensure that all students have the opportunity to achieve to the college- and career-ready standards;
- The state's efforts to conduct outreach and disseminate the college- and career-ready standards;
- The state's efforts to provide professional development and other supports to prepare teachers and principals to provide meaningful instruction to all students, regardless of academic or demographic standing;
- The state's efforts to develop and disseminate high-quality instructional materials that are aligned with the new standards and that will support meaningful instruction to all students, regardless of academic or demographic standing;
- The state's efforts to expand access to college-level courses, dual enrollment courses, or accelerated learning opportunities;
- The state's efforts among the institutions of higher education and teacher/principal preparation programs to better prepare educators to provide meaningful instruction to all students;
- The state's efforts to evaluate its current assessments and increase the rigor of these assessments and their alignment with the state's new standards, to better prepare students and teachers for a newer generation of assessment aligned to the new standards;
- The state's proposals for other related initiatives or activities that will enhance the state's transition and implementation into the state's new standards.

The state provides assurance that this narrative does directly address each of the specified indicators. Given the integrated nature of these indicators, the narrative interweaves many of these indicators for the purpose of improved cohesion and efficient presentation. Precedence is placed on demonstrating the balance, clarity, and integrity of the state's planning efforts.

A Statewide Commitment to the Common Core State Standards

On June 20, 2011, in a statewide press release, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) announced that Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead, State Superintendent, had approved new state content standards in English language arts and mathematics, which were based on the national Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These new content standards will become effective July 1, 2013, after which all local school districts and the state's assessment system must be fully aligned to these standards. Attachment 4 to this Application

presents the June 20, 2011 press release announcement.

The state's new English language arts content standards can be accessed at the following website: http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/content_standards_ela.shtm. The state's new mathematics content standards can be accessed at the following website: http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/content_standards_math.shtm. The approval of both content standards documents completed a development and review process that spanned approximately two years.

In June 2010, following a one year development period, the National Governors' Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers released the national CCSS in English language arts and mathematics, which were developed through a national collaborative effort (http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/common_core.shtm). The NDDPI and statewide educators actively participated in the review and critiquing of the various national CCSS drafts. Following the June 2010 national release, the NDDPI issued a gap analysis study, sponsored by the NDDPI and conducted by Midcontinent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), which assessed the variances that existed between the CCSS and the state's 2005 academic content standards in both English language arts and mathematics (<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/comparison.shtm>).

From June 2010 to April 2011, two separate statewide development committees of approximately seventy content and instructional experts nominated by their supervisors and peers and selected by the NDDPI, reviewed the CCSS, the state's current academic content standards, and the gap analysis study to develop the next generation of state academic content standards in English language arts and mathematics. The NDDPI requested that these committees prepare the next generation of state content standards and to recommend whether the state should proceed to adopt all or elements of the CCSS.

To assist this statewide committee of educators in deliberating and preparing the state's new generation of content standards, the NDDPI commissioned a content-distinct alignment comparative study, also referred to as a content gap analysis, that analyzed the differences and similarities between the current 2005 North Dakota State Content Standards and the national CCSS. This comparative study, conducted by McREL, adopted a study model that analyzed the comparability of content alignment from the 2005 North Dakota state standards perspective to the CCSS perspective and then vice versa. Each manner of review of content alignment produced slightly different and revealing comparisons. This study produced four distinct documents. These four documents formed the basis for the discussions of the statewide standards development committees, who deliberated and provided a recommendation to the State Superintendent regarding the eventual adoption of the CCSS by the state.

Following a ten-month, state-level review process, the content standards development committees prepared draft copies, received comments statewide from educators, completed their work, and voted unanimously that the state adopt the CCSS as the next generation of state content standards. The committees prepared final draft standards that included the CCSS, additional definitions, explanations, and commentary that were deemed useful in making these standards optimally useable for North Dakota educators. The state's new content standards provide annotations from state educator committees that further define, clarify, and present examples of challenging content areas. These embellishments respect the fidelity of the CCSS by stipulating to the verbatim presentation of the CCSS standards

yet addressing recognized deficiencies in the clarity of the CCSS. Annotations are directed to teachers, curriculum development committees, and informed stakeholders. Finally, these committees determined that there existed a substantial need for the state to provide supplementary assistance to local school districts to develop or update their local curricula to meet the increased rigor of the state's new content standards based on the CCSS.

Following an independent review and final editing of all documents by the NDDPI, which retained the original national CCSS language with supplementary state-level commentary, Dr. Sanstead approved and adopted the new content standards, as is provided within state law (NDCC 15.1-02-04; <http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c02.pdf>). The State Superintendent established an effective implementation date of July 1, 2013 for these new content standards to allow local school districts sufficient time to prepare for and deploy necessary curricular changes and to provide for a properly aligned state assessment system.

Dr. Sanstead outlined within the Foreword for both documents the importance of rigorous content standards in preparing students for the future. "North Dakota schools embody a long-standing tradition to build on success and to improve. These standards establish our measures for success. These standards anchor us and guide us. If we are to continue to improve as an educational system, then it is these standards that will help lead us to our goal. The North Dakota content standards are that important to us all," Sanstead stated in the June 20, 2011 press release. "These newly revised and approved state content standards usher in a new era in the development of our state's academic content standards. These content standards reflect the extensive influence of a nationwide discussion on student expectations and the definition of college and career readiness."

Attachment 4(C) and 4(D) to this Application present the State Superintendent's policy statements regarding the purpose and application of the CCSS within the Forewords to the state's new content standards in English language arts and mathematics.

The state's 2005 content standards will remain in effect until July 1, 2013, after which the newly adopted 2011 content standards will become effective for the purposes of the state's accountability system. After July 1, 2013, all public school districts are expected to provide instruction based on these new content standards. Beginning with the 2014-15 academic year, the state will begin the administration of a new generation of state assessments based on these 2011 content standards. The state is participating in two multi-state general assessment consortia and one multi-state alternate assessment consortium to develop the next generation of state assessments, based on the national CCSS.

Since June 2011 with the official adoption of the state's new CCSS-based content standards, committees of statewide educators have prepared subject- and grade-specific curriculum templates to aid local school districts in aligning their curricula in English language arts and mathematics to the state's new 2011 content standards. This collaborative effort has afforded an efficient manner of building effective curriculum supports for teachers statewide, prior to the roll out of these new standards for the 2013-14 academic year.

The extended timeframe for deliberation and the extensive statewide contributions of educators throughout the CCSS adoption process and the development of curriculum template supports, demonstrates the state's commitment to proactively and intentionally deploy a community-wide solution to the adoption and implementation of the next generation of college- and career-readiness standards. The state has adopted a mission-driven and collegial model in the development of all CCSS support materials and human-network efforts.

In the following subsections to Section 1.B, the state presents the principal components of the state's efforts to transition to and implement no later than the 2013-14 school year college- and career-ready standards statewide in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for all students and schools.

A. Establishing a State-level Transition and Implementation Schedule for the CCSS

The NDDPI has established a state-level transition and implementation schedule for the state's new content standards based on the CCSS. The State Superintendent specified in each respective content standards document that the state's new CCSS will become effective on July 1, 2013, in anticipation of the 2013-14 school year. In anticipation of the state's eventual adoption of the CCSS and to establish a state-level multi-year schedule for the state's deployment of the CCSS, the NDDPI distributed a statewide instructional memorandum on April 18, 2011 that provided an implementation overview. Attachment 4(B) to this Application presents this instructional memorandum.

The NDDPI presented to the state's various stakeholders the following three-year transition and implementation schedule regarding the state's next generation of content standards based on the national CCSS:

May 2011. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction adopts the next generation of state content standards in English language arts and mathematics and establishes an effective implementation date of these new content standards as July 1, 2013, to allow local school districts sufficient time to prepare for and deploy necessary curricular changes and to provide for a properly aligned state assessment system.

2011-12. The state develops a curriculum template model for both English language arts and mathematics that will be made available to all districts for their consideration, amendment, and voluntary adoption. This model will be developed by representative curriculum leaders and content specialists from across the state under the facilitation of the North Dakota Curriculum Initiative. Curriculum template development work begins in June 2011.

2012-13. Local school districts voluntarily review and consider the possible adoption of the curriculum template model or some other optional models as the basis for establishing their own local school curricula in English language arts and mathematics based on the state's new content standards. Local school districts will assume responsibility for the adoption of their preferred curriculum model.

2013-14. Effective July 1, 2013 and beginning with the 2013-14 school year, the state aligns all assessment policies to the state's new content standards, based on the national CCSS for full assessment deployment during 2014-15. In October 2013, the current North Dakota State Assessment will be administered for the final time, according to existing protocols. The 2013-14 school year marks the full implementation of the state's new content standards based on the CCSS.

2014-15. The state initiates its new assessment system, preferably based on the efforts of a multi-state assessment consortium. The state currently participates in three national general and alternate assessment consortia, whose assessments will

be aligned fully to the CCSS and allow for valid and reliable measures of student achievement within and among participating states.

This implementation timeline allows the state and local school districts to proceed with efforts to create a meaningful curriculum and assessment system that is aligned to the state's new academic content standards and that meets the various provisions of state and federal law. The state has met all implementation deadlines thus far, and there appear to be no current impediments to meeting future scheduled implementation milestones. The NDDPI has committed itself to providing critical information to the state's various stakeholders regarding each of these development phases throughout the implementation timeframe.

The State Superintendent presented within the Foreword of the state's new content standards documents an overview of important benchmark events critical to the successful implementation of the CCSS, including curriculum development activities and the state's participation in national assessment development consortium work. Attachments 4(C) and 4(D) provide evidence of the state's foundational policy statements regarding its commitment to provide for a successful transition into the next generation of state standards and its statewide instruction, based on the CCSS.

B. Development of Content-distinct Alignment Comparison Studies (i.e., Gap Analysis Studies) Between Current 2005 State Standards and the CCSS.

On June 2, 2010, the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers released the CCSS for English language arts and mathematics. Following the release of the national CCSS, the NDDPI commissioned a content-distinct alignment comparative study, also referred to as a content gap analysis, that analyzed the differences and similarities between the current 2005 North Dakota State Content Standards and the national CCSS. This comparative study, conducted by McREL, adopted a study model that analyzed the comparability of content alignment from the 2005 North Dakota state standards perspective to the CCSS perspective and then vice versa. Each manner of review of content alignment produced slightly different and revealing comparisons. This study produced four distinct documents.

These four documents formed the basis for the discussions of the statewide standards development committees, who deliberated and provided a recommendation to the State Superintendent regarding the eventual adoption of the CCSS by the state. These four distinct content comparison studies provided guidance to the statewide committees regarding any apparent similarities and variances in content between the 2005 state standards documents and the CCSS. These four distinct documents also provide guidance to local school district curriculum development committees and educators during the process of realigning local school curricula to the foundational design and content of the CCSS. The following represent the four distinct content comparison studies:

1. *Comparison of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics to the North Dakota Mathematics Content Standards, Grades K–12, June 2010*, 186 pages, can be accessed at the following website:

http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/comparison/Math_CC_to_ND_17AUG10.pdf.

This document provides a detailed reference tool for understanding the relationship between the *Common Core State Standards for Mathematics* and the *North Dakota Mathematics Content and Achievement Standards (2005)*. It is organized by the CCSS and presents an analysis, done from the perspective of the CCSS, of how content in the CCSS is represented in the North Dakota standards. This document effectively reverses and cross-references the content within (2) immediately below to provide uniquely meaningful information for those seeking such a reverse cross-reference.

2. *Comparison of the North Dakota Mathematics Content Standards to the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, Grades K–12, June 2010*, 310 pages, can be accessed at the following website:

http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/comparison/Math_ND_to_CC_17AUG10.pdf.

This document provides a detailed reference tool for understanding the relationship between the *Common Core State Standards for Mathematics* and the *North Dakota Mathematics Content and Achievement Standards (2005)*. It is organized by the 2005 North Dakota mathematics content standards and presents an analysis, done from the perspective of the 2005 North Dakota mathematics content standards, of how content in the 2005 standards is represented in CCSS. This document effectively reverses and cross-references the content within (1) immediately above to provide uniquely meaningful information for those seeking such a reverse cross-reference.

3. *Comparison of the Common Core State Standards for the English Language Arts to the North Dakota English Language Arts Content Standards, Grades K–12, June 2010*, 257 pages, can be accessed at the following website:

http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/comparison/ELA_CC_to_ND_17AUG10.pdf.

This document provides a detailed reference tool for understanding the relationship between the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts* and the *North Dakota English Language Arts Content and Achievement Standards (2005)*. It is organized by the CCSS and presents an analysis, done from the perspective of the CCSS, of how content in the CCSS is represented in the North Dakota standards. This document effectively reverses and cross-references the content within (4) immediately below to provide uniquely meaningful information for those seeking such a reverse cross-reference.

4. *Comparison of the North Dakota English Language Arts Content Standards to the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, Grades K–12, June 2010*, 349 pages, can be accessed at the following website:

http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/comparison/ELA_ND_to_CC_17AUG10.pdf.

This document provides a detailed reference tool for understanding the relationship between the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts* and the *North Dakota English Language Arts Content and Achievement Standards (2005)*. It is organized by the 2005 North Dakota English language arts content standards and presents an analysis, done from the perspective of the 2005 North Dakota content standards, of how content in the 2005 standards is represented in CCSS. This document effectively reverses and cross-references the content within (3) immediately above to provide uniquely meaningful information for those seeking such a reverse cross-reference.

These paired documents are organized by either the North Dakota 2005 standards or the CCSS, and the analysis in these documents presents both a North Dakota 2005 standards perspective and a CCSS perspective. Educators and others can use these documents as a map from each CCSS standard to the specific North Dakota 2005 standards, and vice versa, that address the same or similar content, allowing users to track where particular student knowledge and skills in the CCSS are addressed in the North Dakota 2005 standards, and vice versa.

The analysis used two categories of criteria to compare the CCSS and North Dakota 2005 content standards: content alignment and rigor. **Content alignment** characterizes the nature of the content match between the CCSS and North Dakota 2005 standards. A *Strong* match indicates the North Dakota 2005 standard fully addresses the content of the CCSS. A *Partial* match is assigned when the North Dakota 2005 content either does not offer the same level of *Specificity* as the CCSS, does not cover the complete *Scope* of the CCSS, differs importantly in its *Emphasis and Phrasing*, provides only an *Implied* coverage of the content, or focuses on a different *Knowledge type*, specifically, that the North Dakota 2005 standard addresses a skill where CCSS addresses the related concept. If more than one of the issues just described characterizes the coverage of the CCSS content by the North Dakota 2005 standard, the alignment is identified as *Weak*. Finally, if a standard in the CCSS could not be aligned to North Dakota 2005 standards, it is marked as *Not Addressed*.

The standards were also compared to identify relative **Rigor**. A benchmark was counted more rigorous over the other when higher demands are made of students, either because mastery of content is expected at an earlier grade, or the expectations regarding the content are significantly more challenging, or both. Cases where content is required at an earlier grade but is less difficult, are not counted as a rigor issue in the grade-level graphs; however, such cases are noted in the comments so that users may review them and consider the discrepancy. The grade level graphs provide a quick overview of how commonly the different types of alignments were found and how the documents differed in level of rigor.

This comparison analysis was the product of a careful review of both content standards documents by content experts. As with any such work, individuals may differ in their interpretation of content and some disagreement concerning specific matches and ratings are inevitable. The content description ratings and rigor designations are provided as a tool to help users understand general trends in the relationship between the two documents; they are not designed as a final critique or absolute evaluation of either document. These comparison studies provide specific information that will help inform discussions about the CCSS as it relates to current and past expectations in North Dakota schools.

C. The North Dakota Curriculum Initiative Develops a CCSS-based Curriculum Template for both Mathematics and English Language Arts

In June 2011 the NDDPI announced that the State Superintendent had approved the adoption of the state's next generation of content standards in mathematics and English language arts, based on the CCSS. Immediately following this adoption of the state's new content standards, which becomes effective July 1, 2013, the NDDPI

proceeded to deploy a series of transition and implementation plans, as specified in subsection A above. The NDDPI identified the development of a content-specific curriculum template based on the CCSS as a primary priority.

The adoption of a new generation of state standards based on the CCSS initiates a host of statewide activities that impact every teacher, administrator, school, district, and the state-at-large. These activities include the review of the new standards by all stakeholders, the development of broad district-level curricular frameworks and maps, the development of specific subject- and grade-level curricula, the training of teachers and administrators regarding all aspects of curriculum and instruction, the development of individual teacher lesson plans, the redesign of instructional strategies and differentiated methods to deliver the curriculum, realigned formative assessment strategies, a reassessment of professional development priorities for teachers and administrators, extensive communications with parents and the community, and a variety of related matters. These activities must be anticipated and planned into the design and flow of any school's or district's transition and implementation plans.

The NDDPI identified three tangible products that local schools and school districts required to proceed with their transitional activities: (1) clear and accessible state content standards documents that present the verbatim documentation of the national CCSS and yet provide additional supportive commentary by informed committees of statewide educators to aid in the interpretation of the CCSS; (2) content alignment comparison studies that aid educators in comparing the similarities and differences of the state's 2005 content standards to the CCSS for the purpose of deepening their understanding how the state's standards are effectively changing across subjects and grades; and (3) subject- and grade-specific curriculum templates that aid teachers, school, and districts to breakdown or unpack the CCSS into meaningful elements that allow for their reassembly into effective curriculum frameworks, maps, lesson plans, and other instructional support components.

In advancing this third support product, curriculum templates, the NDDPI was mindful of the nature and promise of the CCSS as a national document, which would inevitably generate a wide and deep repository of curricular, instructional, and assessment materials contributed by educators nationwide. The state would inevitably gain from this national discussion and development of quality educational support materials; however, such a nationwide development activity would take time to coalesce and to produce the quality of products to serve educators for the foreseeable future. What the NDDPI perceived was the need to proceed immediately to produce support materials that would advance local school districts needs for the development of their local curriculum and the provision of meaningful, high-quality professional development. What educators needed most were tangible documents that detailed the transition that North Dakota schools would generally encounter as they transitioned from their 2005 content standards-based curricula to curricula based on the CCSS. What schools and districts needed most were tangible documents that would provide a strategy and supporting materials to triage their transition into the new CCSS. Yet, since each school and local school district is unique and distinct and each district determined its own curriculum design, what districts needed were curricular support materials that could constitute or represent a template upon which any local school or district might design and build their own unique curricular expression. What the NDDPI perceived was the need to develop a curriculum template based on the CCSS, designed and developed by respected statewide education specialists, to drive the state's CCSS

transition and implementation for the next three to five years.

North Dakota Curriculum Initiative: A Statewide Collaborative

For the past decade, the NDDPI has sponsored the North Dakota Curriculum Initiative (NDCI), a statewide curriculum and professional development collaborative administered through the North Dakota State University, School of Education and Human Development. The NDCI is funded through state-discretionary federal funding, to advance standards-based curriculum efforts among the state's various education stakeholders, including local school districts, administrators, teachers, and interested parties. The NDCI derives its strength and programming from the input of educators across the state. The governance of the NDCI incorporates an advisory committee, which provides counsel to the NDCI executive director and advocates for priorities in professional development and the development of specific supplementary support materials.

The NDDPI approached the NDCI in 2010, in advance of the final adoption of the state's CCSS-based standards, to facilitate a statewide effort using K-12 content and curriculum specialists from across the state to develop a common curriculum template aligned to the CCSS. This subject- and grade-specific curriculum would be made available free-of-charge to assist all local school districts and educators to implement successfully a voluntary curriculum, based on the state's new content standards. This NDCI effort would be designed to meet observations among educators, including the statewide standards development committee and other teachers and administrators, to provide for an effective and efficient means of developing curriculum models without unnecessary duplication of effort across the state's 180 school districts.

Developing a Curriculum Template: Connecting CCSS to Instruction

The NDDPI dedicated financial and technical support to the NDCI to help develop and deploy a curriculum template, which would aid districts and educators prepare effective local curricula and teacher professional development. In its development of the curriculum template, attention was placed on the development of grade- and subject-level transition strategy documents to assist local district transition efforts.

The stated aim of developing a statewide curriculum template was to optimize development activities, shorten development cycles, increase cost effectiveness, improve collaboration among educators and districts, and produce better products than might otherwise be accomplished by a single school district. This effort could produce a variety of deliverables for both English language arts and mathematics at all grade levels, including a common curriculum guide, a master pace guide, detailed standards precursor and post-cursor skill markers, commentary regarding the unpacking of individual standards to better interpret their implied meaning, detailed instructional materials, unit-level organizational aids, identification of problematic content and instructional standards with supporting remediation measures, detailed audio-visual professional development supports, student and parent aids, among other products. This curriculum template development effort would also benefit from the various similar contributions of states involved in similar activities nationwide. This potentially represented an expansive, collaborative effort among educators across the nation, especially those states that participate in the various multi-state assessment consortia.

All deliverables produced through this effort would be made available to all school districts for their voluntary adoption, amendment, or rejection in the subsequent rollout of their respective curricula. There existed no expectation or mandate that these curriculum template materials be adopted by local school districts.

The NDDPI and NDCI worked collaboratively to solicit nominations from the state's local school districts of highly qualified content specialists to form two separate development committees, mathematics and English language arts, to advance this effort. The committee's membership included a number of educators who participated in the original statewide review of the CCSS that ultimately led to its recommendation for adoption. The committee consisted of well-informed and experienced educators. The committee membership included over sixty educators from large and small districts, Title I specialists, special educators, ELL teachers, teachers within predominately American Indian schools, and higher education. The NDCI employed the benefit of its advisory committee of K-12 educators to help guide the effort, including the creation of several specialist advisory subcommittees that included larger school district curriculum directors, regional education association coordinators, small organized school representatives, career and technical educators, and university system curriculum specialists. The actual curriculum template development work began in June 2011 and ran throughout the 2011-12 school year, completing its work in July 2012.

The curriculum template committees engaged in vigorous discussions regarding the necessary elements of each subject- and grade-level template. Committees actively consulted the CCSS, the state content alignment comparison studies, and those national CCSS-curriculum products that were available at that time. The committees identified certain subject and grades that required specific attention to certain elements. Priority was placed on aiding local school districts and educators with quick-hit success strategies that would propel their local development efforts along at a greater speed, with increased efficiency, and with a greater likelihood of success. The committees identified five general organizational categories of content that guided their development efforts and that provided a structure for the communication of deliverables. These five categories included attention to the following:

1. Interpreting the levels of meaning inherent in the CCSS;
2. Understanding the content of the individual standards within the CCSS;
3. Probing instructional strategies to unleash the potential within the CCSS;
4. Incorporating formative and summative assessment elements into instruction;
5. Assimilating future research and development projects regarding the CCSS into instruction.

During the course of their development, the curriculum template initial-draft products were posted on the NDCI website to solicit peer comments and to allow for their use by local school districts and educators. The final curriculum template products from this first year of development are available at the following NDCI website:
http://ndcurriculuminitiative.org/common_core.

Although the specific content and format of the curriculum template products may vary, based on the recommended priorities and presentations of the subject- and grade-committees, educators will encounter information critical to the development of

local school curriculum, pacing guides, lesson plans, and the delivery of formative instruction, including:

1. Grade-specific presentation of the state's CCSS-based standards;
2. Grade-specific content alignment comparison study documents;
3. Grade-specific transitional guides, which focus attention to the emergence and shifting of critical content;
4. Cross-grade transitional guides, which present longitudinal changes in content;
5. Identification of grade-specific challenging standards, which require special attention to curricular design and instructional strategies by educators;
6. Student "I Can" statements, which clarify the focused knowledge or skill implicit within each CCSS standard's statement;
7. Critical vocabulary or definitions, which are required to successfully teach each standard's statement;
8. Pacing guides, which provide a road map for a curriculum design;
9. Unit plans, which provide examples of how to structure the delivery of content;
10. Sample lesson plans, which illustrate the wide variety of instructional options;
11. Content specification guidance from both the PARCC and SBAC assessment consortia, which provide validation to the interpretation of certain CCSS content;
12. Parent literature, which provides an overview of the CCSS in straightforward language; and
13. Various materials deemed important by the template committees for specific subjects and grades.

Statewide Convocation of Stakeholders: Building Consensus for Future Efforts

On June 28, 2012, the NDCI presented the final compendium of curriculum template materials to the statewide gathering of over sixty representatives of a statewide collaborative representing a deep and diverse association of education stakeholders. This statewide convocation met to address the following three NDCI-initiated issues: (1) to provide recommendations to help schools better align their curriculum to the CCSS in an informed and efficient manner; (2) to identify specific CCSS priorities, including certain challenging or problematic content, and to present an overview of the variety of support materials generated by state and national content specialists; and (3) to formalize a network of education stakeholders dedicated to building a collaborative for integrated CCSS best-practices, including curriculum and professional development. The gathering of stakeholders included the following:

1. North Dakota School Study Council, a collaborative of sixteen of the state's largest school districts;
2. North Dakota Regional Education Associations and North Dakota Small Organized Schools, eight state-supported regional education service providers and leadership representatives from the Small Organized Schools who coordinate services to all school districts regionally;
3. North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education (CTE), the representative state CTE regional centers;
4. North Dakota University System, the coordinating representatives of the state's various public and private institutions of higher education; and

5. Association of critical education stakeholder organizations, including the

- a. Office of the Governor;
- b. North Dakota Education Association;
- c. North Dakota School Boards Association;
- d. North Dakota Council of Education Leaders;
- e. North Dakota LEAD Center;
- f. North Dakota Pathfinders Parent Center;
- g. North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Committee;
- h. North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission;
- i. North Dakota Title I Practitioners Committee; and
- j. North Dakota English Language Learners.

Presentations before this statewide convocation were provided by the NDDPI, the NDCI, content specialists from the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) and the North Central Comprehensive Center (NCCC), a member of the NDDPI's assessment technical advisory committee, and representatives from the NDCI's curriculum template development committees. The members of the NDCI curriculum template development committees presented an overview of the compendium of curriculum template materials and discussed the various recommendations forthcoming from the committees regarding the state's and local efforts to deploy and implement the CCSS. The various representatives of this statewide convocation expressed gratitude to the curriculum template committees for their efforts, support for the quantity and quality of the compendium of the curriculum template materials, and a commitment to advancing a statewide collaborative effort to advance the implementation of the CCSS.

It is the stated commitment of the NDDPI and the NDCI, and its network of collaborative associations, to continue the development of certain CCSS-support materials and the posting of identified high-quality materials from across the nation for the next several years. The NDCI will continue to build its website design to provide a clearinghouse for the increasingly wide variety of CCSS documentation. The future of the NDCI and its development, networking, and professional development efforts follows in subsection E to this Application.

D. NDDPI Develops a CCSS-based Curriculum Template for Special Education Supplementary Support in Formative Instruction

Throughout the development of the NDCI's compendium of curriculum template materials, the drafting committees identified the need to allocate dedicated resources and to initiate separate development efforts regarding the differentiated instruction of special education students and English language learners. Committee members expressed their need to focus their development efforts toward the original design of a statewide *curriculum* template, which concentrated on district-level curriculum implementation, mindful of the demands of the work and the limitations of dedicated time and resources. Committee members, the NDDPI, and the NDCI concurred that there existed an overwhelming need to expand the work of the curriculum template committees into the specific needs of other learners who might require additional instructional supplementary supports based on the CCSS, such as students with disabilities and English language learners. To better support the longer-term release of

these differentiated instructional materials, the NDDPI committed resources to develop these materials incrementally, beginning first with mathematics for special education (summer 2012), proceeding to English language arts for special education (early fall 2012), and concluding with both mathematics and English language arts for English learners (late fall 2012). Beginning with the fall 2012 development activities, the NDCI will assume all responsibilities for the administration of this development work.

To expedite the process of proceeding with these dedicated supplemental development activities, the NDDPI, with the agreement and support of the NDCI, convened a statewide committee of special educators to build upon the NDCI curriculum template subject- and grade-specific materials to develop specific special education-related supports for formative instruction, based on the CCSS. This statewide committee consisted of special education specialists who have participated in the development and maintenance of the state's various alternate assessments, thereby engaging a group of highly-trained and dedicated standards-based practitioners. This statewide special education development committee met during the summer 2012 and followed development protocols consistent with the NDCI curriculum template committees to create supplementary support materials in mathematics. A separate statewide special education development committee will convene in the late-fall 2012 to create supplementary support materials in English language arts.

This statewide special education development committee created an extended series of mathematics deliverables for incorporation within the NDCI compendium of curriculum template materials. These supplementary materials provide to local educators critical mathematics content-based supports to the instructional needs of special education students. These supplementary materials have been completed and are being included within the NDCI curriculum template repository at the following website: http://ndcurriculuminitiative.org/common_core/. Materials are being integrated at each subject- and grade-specific website to underscore the desired integration of general and special education efforts.

E. *North Dakota Curriculum Initiative, CCSS-Focused Activities, 2012-14*

Subsection C above presents an overview of the work of the NDCI during 2011-12 to develop a compendium of curriculum template materials that support the efforts of local school districts and educators to implement successfully the CCSS. This work has been completed and educators statewide have expressed their satisfaction with the results, during this early-stage in the state's transition into the CCSS.

Although the initial stages of creating a structure to house a compendium of CCSS-based curriculum template materials has been initially complete, the nature of these products and the context of the wider CCSS implementation demonstrate that any established compendium is evolutionary and will continue to be revised and expanded. Additional state-generated materials need development. The work of compiling and incorporating high-quality, national CCSS-based materials is ongoing and unending. Observations from education stakeholder associations reinforce the need to adopt a long-term perspective to the implementation of the CCSS.

Based on the scope and quality of the work conducted thus far and the input of

educators and statewide education associations, the NDDPI has identified three priorities to advance the future implementation of the CCSS, during 2012-14. The NDCI concurs with these priorities and has prepared a multi-year plan, with the funding support and technical assistance of the NDDPI, to build further statewide capacity to implement the CCSS statewide in all its diverse expressions. Adopting the priorities of the NDDPI, the NDCI has proposed an operational plan for 2012-15 that directs its resources to addressing each of three priority objectives, which correspond to the priorities articulated by the NDDPI. Presented below is an overview of the essential elements of this multi-year plan.

The NDCI Operational Plan, 2012-15

I. Objective 1: Broaden and deepen the network of statewide education stakeholders to ensure a diverse, collaborative CCSS implementation strategy

Through its originating mission and structure, the NDCI has provided an operational means of integrating statewide standards-based curriculum efforts with those of local school districts, regional education associations, institutions of higher education, and other education stakeholders. The NDCI is funded by the NDDPI and is managed by the North Dakota State University, School of Education and Human Development, one of the state's two research, land grant institutions of higher education. This structure has afforded the NDCI the ability to build unique cooperative arrangements among state and local education interests to advance a common mission. This collaborative of interests allows for a respectful and productive means of advancing statewide curriculum agenda while inviting wide and diverse implementation models inherent within the state's culture of local control.

The NDCI has stated that among its top priorities it will reconstitute its formal organizational structure to expand its network of statewide education stakeholders to optimize the benefits of its product generation and professional development activities. This expanded network will provide an appropriate forum for its functional advisory committee and the various statewide education stakeholders to convene periodically to collaborate on CCSS-based initiatives, thereby enhancing the prospects of more efficient and effective results. To accomplish this aim the NDCI specified three networking initiatives:

a. Reconstitute the NDCI Advisory Committee Membership

The NDCI will appoint a new Advisory Committee, with membership drawn from administrators and teachers from a diverse combination of local settings. The Advisory Committee will provide ongoing advice and assistance to the NDCI executive director to improve the administrative operation, client-centered programming options, research priorities, and future priorities and planning of the NDCI. The NDCI will provide professional in-service to Advisory Committee members regarding its need to attend to the expansive nature of the NDCI mission and its responsiveness to future state education planning.

b. Formalize the NDCI Network of Education Stakeholder Associations

The NDCI will draw from the membership of the State ESEA Planning Committee, as presented in the previous Consultation section of this

Application, to constitute a formal network of collaboration subcommittees for the purposes of unifying CCSS planning, program implementation, and research and evaluation activities statewide. The membership of the State ESEA Planning Committee from which the NDCI collaboration subcommittee will draw its membership includes the following:

- Office of the Governor;
- North Dakota State Senate;
- North Dakota House of Representatives;
- North Dakota Department of Public Instruction;
- North Dakota University System;
- North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education;
- North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission;
- North Dakota School Boards Association;
- North Dakota Education Association;
- North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders;
- North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board;
- Pathfinders Parent Center
- North Dakota Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Advisory Committee;
- North Dakota Title I Committee of Practitioners;
- North Dakota Curriculum Initiative;
- North Dakota English Language Learners;
- North Dakota Education Technology Council;
- North Dakota Regional Education Associations;
- North Dakota Small Organized Schools;
- North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council;
- North Dakota School Study Council;
- North Dakota Child Protection Services; and
- North Dakota Chamber of Commerce.

The NDCI will seek technical assistance, with the aid of the NDDPI, from the North Central Comprehensive Center (NCCC), Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (NCCTQ), and representatives from the North Dakota Technical Advisory Committee for the state's assessment system.

As presented previously in subsection C above, the NDCI has formed and commissioned its network of collaborative subcommittees to advance its statewide CCSS agenda. On June 28, 2012, the NDCI convened its network of collaborative subcommittees to present and assess the final compendium of curriculum template materials. This statewide convocation met to address the following three NDCI-initiated issues: (1) to provide recommendations to help schools better align their curriculum to the CCSS in an informed and efficient manner; (2) to identify specific CCSS priorities and to present an overview of the variety of support materials generated by state and national content specialists; and (3) to formalize this network of education stakeholders dedicated to building a collaborative for integrated CCSS best-practices, including curriculum and professional development.

The gathering of stakeholders included the following:

1. North Dakota School Study Council, an formal collaborative of sixteen of the state's largest school districts, who represent some of the most influential school districts with established capacity to design and deliver curricular and instructional development efforts and who provide direct support to smaller school districts and regional education associations;
2. North Dakota Regional Education Associations and North Dakota Small Organized Schools, eight formal, state-supported regional education service providers and leadership representatives from the Small Organized Schools who coordinate services to all school districts regionally with special concentration on smaller school districts;
3. North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education (CTE), the representative state CTE regional centers who concentrate their curricular and instructional efforts among school districts and regions regarding CTE initiatives;
4. North Dakota University System, the coordinating representatives of the state's various public and private institutions of higher education; and
5. Association of critical education stakeholder organizations who provide advocacy leadership in a variety of manners, including the advancement of partnerships, collaborative planning, and the design of state-level education initiatives; this subcommittee's membership includes
 - Office of the Governor;
 - North Dakota State Senate;
 - North Dakota House of Representatives;
 - North Dakota Department of Public Instruction;
 - North Dakota University System;
 - North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education;
 - North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission;
 - North Dakota School Boards Association;
 - North Dakota Education Association;
 - North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders;
 - North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board;
 - Pathfinders Parent Center
 - North Dakota Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Advisory Committee;
 - North Dakota Title I Committee of Practitioners;
 - North Dakota Curriculum Initiative;
 - North Dakota English Language Learners;
 - North Dakota Education Technology Council;
 - North Dakota Regional Education Associations;

- North Dakota Small Organized Schools;
- North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council;
- North Dakota School Study Council;
- North Dakota Child Protection Services; and
- North Dakota Chamber of Commerce.

These collaborative subcommittees have begun the process of identifying critical cross-agency activities that will broaden the education and wider communities' understanding of the CCSS, provide specific and detailed information to educators regarding content and instructional strategies that will further reinforce the CCSS's inherent value, offer an efficient and effective means of disseminating high-quality, local and national supplementary support materials, and unify initiatives among stakeholders.

It is the stated commitment of the NDDPI and the NDCI, and its network of collaborative partners, to continue to broaden and deepen their existing partnerships during the state's transition into and early implementation phases of the CCSS, 2012-15. The NDCI will facilitate a combination of subcommittee-specific meetings, regional and state content-specific gatherings, and statewide convocations of the combined collaborative partners. The NDDPI has invited the NDCI to amend its current grant funding level to support meaningful initiatives proposed by the NDCI and its collaborative partners. The NDCI will continue to facilitate statewide collaborative communications for the increasingly wide variety of CCSS-support initiatives.

c. NDCI Sponsors Regional Meetings and Statewide Convocations

Since its inception, the NDCI has sponsored a variety of series of regional and statewide meetings that have concentrated on various themes, including the development and implementation of different generations of state content and achievement standards, the state's summative and interim assessment initiatives, the structure and operation of the state's longitudinal student data system, data-driven decision making, differentiated formative instructional strategies, curriculum leadership, among others. The NDCI remains committed to sustaining this work of outreach to educators across the state.

The NDCI has identified the need to actively advance regional meetings and statewide convocations during 2012-15 that are specifically directed to the transition into and early-stage implementation of the CCSS. The NDCI has sought and received the cooperation of the NCCC, McREL, and representatives of the state's assessment TAC to serve as technical advisors regarding the design and delivery of these gatherings.

The NDCI is finalizing arrangements for longer-term regional and statewide gatherings on topics that have arisen from input provided by the curriculum template design committees and the NDCI's collaborative partners network. The NDCI intends to build all regional and statewide gatherings around high-quality professional development principles, which produce strands of follow-up professional learning community components. All gatherings will both address

critical agenda matters and advance the broadening and deepening of regional and statewide networks of collaborators.

II. Objective 2: Provide for a clearinghouse of statewide, high-quality professional development opportunities that draw in talented facilitators and expand the number and types of professional development expressions and forums

The NDCI is an active proponent of high-quality professional development that advances standards-based curriculum and instruction statewide. This commitment is a critical component of the NDCI's mission. Consultations with the NDCI's curriculum template development committees and the NDCI collaborative partners network have provided both an updated context and agenda for the NDCI to move proactively regarding the future implementation of the CCSS, 2012-15.

To address the agenda put forth from its various stakeholders, the NDCI is establishing the *Academy for Formative Instruction and Assessment* (hereafter, Academy) to provide a framework for providing an integrated array of professional training for the state's educators, including district administrators, principals, curriculum coordinators, regional directors, instructional leaders, teachers, aides, and support staff. The Academy will provide for three central strands of training offerings: (1) curriculum leadership enhancement, (2) formative instructional strategies, and (3) integrated assessment strategies.

The NDCI Academy provides an opportunity to voluntarily participate in either dedicated strands of collegial training or self-selected individual training offerings. The NDCI will provide the opportunity for participants to receive CEUs from participating institutions of higher education and which can be applied toward their ongoing teaching licensure requirements. The NDCI Academy will offer training sessions that may vary from ongoing communications forums to dedicated boot camp styled training to short topical sessions to longer-term intensive courses. The NDCI will contract with certain qualified providers who will assume responsibility for the preparation, presentation, and follow up of selected programs. The NDCI will also solicit the submission of proposals from interested qualified educators and consultants that are high-quality and directed to the topics specified by the NDCI. The NDCI, in collaboration with McREL, has prepared a Request for Proposals protocol that will provide for an open exchange and evaluation of creative training opportunities.

The NDCI Academy will combine in-person regional and statewide meetings with conference call and webinar formats to provide for a wider option of live participation. The NDCI Academy will also provide previously recorded in-person sessions or studio produced sessions, which will allow for participants the option to gain from these offerings in after-hour sessions, available anytime online.

The following overviews the Academy's three strands of programming.

1. Curriculum Leadership Enhancement

The Curriculum Leadership Enhancement strand is directed to district administrators, curriculum coordinators, principals, and instructional leaders, although any interested individual may participate. This leadership strand

guides participants throughout the process of establishing and maintaining a high quality, standards-based, district- and school-level curriculum management system. Curriculum management entails the protocols required to organize, staff, and maintain various subject-specific committees charged with developing and implementing standards-based curricula. Management also encompasses the supervisory and quality control skills required to sustain a valid and reliable district- and school-level system.

Although the Curriculum Leadership Enhancement strand's protocols and training are applicable to any subject-specific effort, the strand's initial offerings will focus on the transition into and early-phase implementation of the CCSS. These topics may include district- and community-level communications, establishment of professional learning community models to sustain longer-term CCSS learning among educators, subject-specific content challenges that require immediate attention during the stated transition period, movement toward establishing a district- and school-level commitment to differentiated formative instruction reflective of CCSS expectations, preparing for the transition to CCSS-assessments in 2014-15, integrating Response to Intervention strategies reflective of the CCSS, and other relevant topics.

The Curriculum Leadership Enhancement strand's training models will combine (a) individual, subject-specific sessions that may span perhaps one to five sessions; (b) intermediate-term boot camp styled sessions, perhaps spanning five to ten sessions, which overview the foundational protocols of curriculum management; or (c) longer-term academic courses, spanning numerous sessions across multiple weeks, which provide deeper, research-based instruction, discussion, and product generation.

The Curriculum Leadership Enhancement strand is designed to build the competencies of its participants to assume higher levels of curriculum leadership within districts and schools based on deeper levels of content and process knowledge.

2. Formative Instructional Strategies

The Formative Instructional Strategies strand is directed to curriculum coordinators, principals, instructional leaders, teachers, and aides, although any interested individual may participate. This formative instruction strand guides participants throughout the process of designing curriculum to constructing instructional pacing to lesson planning to the preparation, delivery, and follow through of instruction. Formative instruction integrates the science and art of instruction, where curriculum design prepares the stage for interactive instruction, where the active engagement of students blends into probing assessment, and where follow up instruction amends itself to meet the various levels and needs of students' evident understanding. Formative instruction covers the wide and rich array of teaching strategies that provide relevance and clear expectations for all students, regardless of their academic standing.

Although the Formative Instructional Strategies strand's content and training are applicable to any subject-specific effort, the strand's initial offering will

focus on the transition into and early-phase implementation of the CCSS. The NDCI's curriculum template development committees and the collaborative partner network have identified several specific topics, within both mathematics and English language arts, which will require shorter- and longer-term offerings. These identified topics include:

a. English Language Arts

- Realigning educators' understanding of text complexity;
- Realigning each grade level's content emphasis toward the CCSS;
- Focusing attention to applied writing;
- Ensuring cross-curriculum integration of CCSS expectations;
- Establishing local achievement expectation rubrics;
- Focusing on identified content challenges inherent in the CCSS;
- Ensuring differentiated strategies for special education and ELL students;

b. Mathematics

- Attending to early-grade content changes;
- Anticipating increased middle-grade expectations and intensity;
- Reassessing high school course stranding options;
- Identifying requisite skill demands and attending to struggling students;
- Expanding statistics and probability offerings in high school;
- Applying universally mathematical practices within instruction;
- Focusing on identified content challenges inherent in the CCSS;
- Ensuring differentiated strategies for special education and ELL students;

The Formative Instructional Strategy strand's training models will combine (a) individual, subject-specific sessions that may span perhaps one to five sessions; (b) intermediate-term boot camp styled sessions, perhaps spanning five to ten sessions, which overview the foundational protocols of curriculum management; or (c) longer-term academic courses, spanning numerous sessions across multiple weeks, which provide deeper, research-based instruction, discussion, and product generation. It is anticipated that many teachers will participate in online after-hour sessions, which will have been previously recorded during in-person interactive sessions or from studio-produced sessions. All recorded sessions will be placed in a clearinghouse repository for ready access by users.

3. Integrated Assessment Strategies

The Integrated Assessment Strategies strand is directed to assessment coordinators, curriculum coordinators, principals, instructional leaders, teachers, and aides, although any interested individual may participate. This integrated assessment strand guides participants through the protocols of properly managing district- and school-level assessment programs and the integration of assessment design within classroom instruction. Integrated assessment strategies strive to apply summative, interim, and formative

assessments for the support and advancement of quality instruction and eventual student achievement outcomes.

Although the Integrated Assessment Strategies strand's content and training are applicable, in variant fashion, to most subject-specific efforts, the strand's initial offerings will focus on the transition into and early-phase implementation of the CCSS. The NDCI's curriculum template development committees and the collaborative partner network have identified several specific topics, which will require dedicated attention. These identified topics include:

- Understanding integrated assessments, including summative, interim, and formative;
- Anticipating the next generation of summative and interim assessments, 2014-15, including choices, preparations, and applications;
- Understanding student growth and growth measurement models;
- Developing, planning, and applying formative assessment within instruction;
- Understanding the flow of assessment within instruction;
- Understanding the design and use of standardized assessments;
- Building a statewide assessment development network.

The Integrated Assessment Strategy strand's training models will combine (a) individual, subject-specific sessions that may span perhaps one to five sessions; (b) intermediate-term boot camp styled sessions, perhaps spanning five to ten sessions, which overview the foundational protocols of curriculum management; or (c) longer-term academic courses, spanning numerous sessions across multiple weeks, which provide deeper, research-based instruction, discussion, and product generation. It is anticipated that many teachers will participate in online after-hour sessions, which will have been previously recorded during in-person interactive sessions or from studio-produced sessions. All recorded sessions will be placed in a clearinghouse repository for ready access by users.

III. Objective 3: Expand the development, compilation, and dissemination of curricular and instructional supplementary support materials that aid educators in providing meaningful differentiated, formative instruction and assessments, based on the CCSS

During 2010-11 the NDCI realigned its programming to study the national CCSS documentation and the state's content alignment comparison studies to provide ultimately its recommendation to the NDDPI regarding the possible adoption of the CCSS as the state's official content standards in mathematics and English language arts. During 2011-12 the NDCI dedicated its full resources to develop, compile, and disseminate curriculum template materials to support schools and educators implementation efforts. For the past two years, the NDCI, with the funding and technical support of the NDDPI and with the consultation support of its national comprehensive centers, has moved the state forward in its transition into the CCSS. These steps represent substantial accomplishments and

milestone toward the state's ultimate transition and implementation strategy.

During the course of these two years of study and development, the NDCI has compiled the observations and recommendations of its development committee members and its statewide collaborative partners network. Consistent throughout these collective comments is the desire for the NDCI to continue the work which began with the development of curriculum template supplementary support materials.

The stated aim of developing a statewide curriculum template was to optimize development activities, shorten development cycles, increase cost effectiveness, improve collaboration among educators and districts, and produce better products than might otherwise be accomplished by a single school district. This effort could produce a variety of deliverables for both English language arts and mathematics at all grade levels, including a common curriculum guide, a master pace guide, detailed standards precursor and post-cursor skill markers, commentary regarding the unpacking of individual standards to better interpret their implied meaning, detailed instructional materials, unit-level organizational aids, identification of problematic content and instructional standards with supporting remediation measures, detailed audio-visual professional development supports, student and parent aids, among other products. This curriculum template development effort would benefit from the various similar contributions of states involved in similar activities nationwide. This potentially represented an expansive, collaborative effort among educators across the nation, especially those states that participate in the various multi-state assessment consortia.

North Dakota educators have recognized the achieved value of the curriculum template, its promise for integrating future value-added products, and assimilating the contributions of developers nationwide. North Dakota educators have requested specifically that this work continue.

The NDCI has elected to continue the work begun in 2010 by building additional supports for the curriculum template and by extending beyond the template to develop identified standards-based products to support other subject areas, especially science and its emerging next generation standards, to acquire similar supports. The NDCI has identified the development of systemic infrastructure supports as a proper and achievable objective in its strategic plan.

Specifically, the NDCI has committed itself to expand the development, compilation, and dissemination of curricular and instructional supplementary support materials that aid educators in providing meaningful differentiated, formative instruction and assessments, based on the CCSS. To accomplish this systemic aim, the NDCI, with the funding and technical assistance of the NDDPI, has developed two independent initiatives: (a) scaling up production activities to develop the state's next generation of academic content and achievement standards in science, the arts, foreign language, and physical education; and (b) developing research-based curriculum supplementary support materials that support the delivery of differentiated formative instruction and assessment based on the CCSS. The following provides an overview of each of these initiatives.

1. Development of Forthcoming State Content and Achievement Standards

The development, dissemination, and implementation of academic content and achievement standards is an established responsibility of the state. The NDDPI has collaborated with the NDCI for this past decade to develop and disseminate various state standards documents, based on established state protocols, to deepen the engagement of educators statewide. The NDCI has earmarked resources during 2012-15 to continue this historical practice regarding the generation of content standards in science, the arts, foreign language, and physical education. The following summarizes this activity.

a. Science

The release of the national CCSS marks a unique benchmark in the development of state academic content standards and the progression of the voluntary collaboration among the states. This collaboration has extended further into the forthcoming release of the next generation of national science standards. The NDCI will apply the same protocols employed during the study and release of the CCSS to advance the study and recommendation related to the next generation of science standards. The NDCI will coordinate the formation of content specialist committees; the facilitation of external technical advisors; the generation, editing, publication, and dissemination of content standards documents; and the eventual evaluation and recommendation of findings to the NDDPI.

b. Other Academic Content Disciplines

Although there is currently no forthcoming national efforts to develop academic content standards in subject other than mathematics, English language arts, and science, the state must still update and maintain its library of core academic content standards in all related disciplines. At the request of the NDDPI, the NDCI will coordinate pre-development activities in anticipation of the revision of the state's academic content standards in the arts, foreign language, and physical education. Any pre-development activities will follow established state protocols provided by the NDDPI.

2. Continued Development of Curriculum Supplementary Support Materials Based on the CCSS

The NDCI will continue its commitment to develop curriculum supplementary support materials to support the efforts of North Dakota educators to implement successfully the CCSS. The NDCI will consult with its selected advisory committee, the statewide collaborative partners network, the curriculum template development committee, and the NDDPI, to establish a queue of deliverables to meet educators' prioritized needs. The NDCI will employ a combination of strategies to develop these materials: (a) reconvening all or elements of the NDCI curriculum template development committees; (b) contracting with individual educators to develop selective resources; or (c) contracting with established education consultants to develop more technical and extensive resources.

The NDCI will contract with established vendors to conduct a nationwide

search for high-quality CCSS materials to identify materials appropriate for inclusion within the curriculum template website. Specific attention will be placed on materials produced by states, school districts, educators, assessment consortia, comprehensive centers, or other public domain providers who have dedicated resources to develop similar supplementary support materials.

The NDCI will direct initial attention to developing materials that address

- components within the current curriculum template that have been identified for further expansion;
- differentiated instruction for students with disabilities and English language learners;
- rubrics or descriptors that provide clarity in defining and interpreting achievement level expectations;
- content of critical professional development courses for delivery by the NDCI Academy for challenging subjects;

Materials generated by this activity will be posted on the NDCI website for general distribution.

The NDCI constitutes a substantial asset to the state. The NDDPI commits itself to sustaining this investment into the foreseeable future.

F. NDDPI Adopts the World/Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium's 2012 Amplification of the English Language Development Standards for Linkage to CCSS

In 2012 the WIDA Assessment Consortium released the 2012 Amplification of the English language development Standards (hereafter WIDA ELD Standards), which provide a framework that presents examples of language use in a mainstream classroom setting that are appropriately aligned to the CCSS. The WIDA ELD Standards can be accessed at the following web address:

<http://wida.us/get.aspx?id=540>. The NDDPI has adopted the WIDA ELD Standards and important instructional supports for English language learners and their ability to engage successfully in the CCSS.

These WIDA ELD Standards present appropriate expectations for academic language in the classroom setting. The connection displays the content standard referenced in the example topic or example context for language use. The standards that appear in this section are drawn from the CCSS, the Next Generation Science Standards, and content standards from various states.

The WIDA ELD Standards acknowledge that language learning is maximized in authentic and relevant contexts. The WIDA ELD Standards include tasks or situations in which communication occurs, for example, when students engage in group work or conduct research online. The WIDA ELD Standards includes considerations for who participates in any communication, the intended audience, and the types of roles that different participants enact. Such considerations, for

example, include the various roles students assume in group work and how language expectations might vary based on a student's assumed role, such as a facilitator, note-taker, or participant. In addition to considerations for the context of learning, the content curriculum specifically impacts the register, genre, and text types that students and educators will need experiment with and explore.

The NDDPI has proceeded to develop future professional development opportunities for ELL specialists and educators, in collaboration with the NDCI Academy, to provide instructional support strategies related to the statewide implementation of the CCSS. The following subsection overviews this effort.

G. *NDDPI and NDCI to Develop CCSS-based Supplementary Supports and Academy-based Professional Development Modules for English Language Learner Specialists and Educators*

Subsection D of the Application presents the contributions of statewide special educators, further supported by NDCI, to develop curriculum template supplementary support materials for special educators. These materials paralleled the purpose and design of the general curriculum template deliverables. Throughout the development of the NDCI's compendium of curriculum template materials, the drafting committees identified the need to allocate dedicated resources and to initiate separate development efforts regarding the differentiated instruction of English language learners (ELL). Committee members expressed the need to focus additional development efforts, reflective of the original design of a statewide curriculum template, which would concentrate efforts on district-level needs for ELL. Committee members, the NDDPI, and the NDCI concurred that there existed an overwhelming need to extend the scope of the curriculum template to support educators of English language learners. Additionally, the NDDPI and NDCI have identified the need to develop and deliver specific Academy-based professional development sessions (refer to Subsection F of this Application) that will offer ELL educators appropriate instructional supports.

The NDDPI has committed resources to support the longer-term release of these differentiated instructional materials and the development and delivery of Academy-based professional development during 2012-13. The NDCI, in collaboration with the NDDPI Title III Office, will convene nominated ELL specialists from across the state to identify and disseminate any additional ELL support materials and to prepare a series of Academy professional development sessions dedicated to the impact of the CCSS on the delivery of ELL programming. This activity is scheduled to begin in the fall 2012 with deliverables that will be completed and disseminated incrementally throughout the 2012-13 academic year. The NDDPI Title III Office and the state's ELL Advisory Committee have initially recommended that the NDCI incorporate all WIDA standards materials (refer to <http://wida.us/standards/eld.aspx>), which have been validated for fidelity to the CCSS, within the NDCI curriculum template.

Initial professional development proposals focus attention on unpacking the 2012 WIDA Assessment Consortium's English language development (ELD) standards, which present examples how academic language is used in the common core standards. The sample standards include the necessary vocabulary, cognitive

function, language domain and list the linguistic expectations by English language proficiency level. The 2012 ELD standards document is similarly formatted to the curriculum template that has been developed by content specialists in North Dakota.

During the 2012-13 academic year, NDCI and NDDPI will co-host Academy-based professional development sessions in two areas of the state for ELL educators to develop content area lessons using the CCSS and the ELD standards. These Academy offerings provide an in-depth opportunity to apply the ELD Standards to classroom instruction. Participants will explore the purpose and process of transforming the model performance indicators (MPIs) and apply these ideas to their specific educational settings. Participants will discuss the importance of lesson planning for content and language development, create effective student profiles for language instruction, discuss the importance of lesson planning for content and language development, transform MPIs to reflect specific instructional settings, identify language goals for instruction and assessment.

All products developed throughout this process will be integrated fully within the NDCI curriculum template's repository of products (http://ndcurriculuminitiative.org/common_core/). All developed professional development sessions will be integrated within the library of Academy-based professional development offerings.

H. Dissemination of Parent Information Regarding the CCSS

The NDDPI has posted on its website and made available to the local school districts parent information packets which have been developed by the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA). This series of parent information packets presents an overview of the CCSS in easily accessible, non-technical language for both mathematics and English language arts at each grade level. This information is designed to introduce parents to the emergence of changes in content and expectation levels inherent within the CCSS. These packets present the rationale for the CCSS and the beneficial promise the CCSS holds for each student to achieve to their potential. This series of subject- and grade-specific parent information packets can be accessed at the following NDDPI website:

<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/pamphlets.shtm>. The NDDPI has encouraged local school districts and educators to access and distribute these packets to all parents.

Independently, the NDCI has similarly incorporated these national PTA parent information packets within each of the subject- and grade-specific files within the NDCI curriculum template website. Refer to this website address to access the individual subject- and grade-level files: http://ndcurriculuminitiative.org/common_core/. The NDCI has included these PTA packets within each curriculum template file to encourage teachers to access and distribute these packets to their students' parents.

These PTA parent information packets constitute a meaningful communications link between schools and parents.

I. State Regional Education Associations Support the Implementation of the CCSS through a Hess Corporation Grant

In 2011 the Hess Corporation awarded to the state, through the Office of the Governor, a five-year, \$25 million grant to advance the state's efforts to increase student achievement and graduation rates. These grant awards constituted a statewide initiative, entitled Succeed 2020, to develop meaningful educational enhancements in curriculum and professional development that carry the promise of evidencing significant student achievement rate improvements by the year 2020.

Within the Hess Corporation's grant award to the state, provisions stipulate that any and all education enhancement activities covered by the grant must be administered by any of the state's eight Regional Education Associations (REAs), whose grant proposals meet or exceed the content specifications of the grant's Request for Proposals. Certain funds are set aside to cover the technical assistance costs incurred by those services provided by FHI 360, a nationally recognized leader in education support services. Dedicated programming funds are awarded incrementally to the highest quality proposals submitted by the REAs and are distributed over the course of a five-year programming cycle. It is the design of the grant award that any unsuccessful grant applicant would receive direct technical assistance to improve upon its proposal, which would eventually lead to the funding of all REA proposals.

North Dakota state statute defines the duties of REAs, which largely entail providing to those local school districts that lie within their respective region direct support services related to curriculum development, collaborative planning and resource distribution, student data outcomes analysis, and the provision of professional development. Additionally, the eight REAs also collectively constitute one of the five core subcommittees within the NDCI collaborative partners network. As such, the REAs are active participants and critical players in completing the state's network of service providers and have stated their interest in joining with the other subcommittees in providing a supportive role in the statewide implementation of the CCSS.

Each of the first round award grantees has addressed the implementation of the CCSS as a core component in developing college- and career-ready enhancements to their curricula. Although each REA has developed a unique plan of action to use the Hess grant funds to implement the CCSS, there exists consistent themes to the efforts, which are presented below as presented in the state's South East Education Cooperative.

1. Build Awareness and Communication Across the Cooperative
 - a. Build capacity for leading change at the district, school and classroom level;
 - b. Strengthen knowledge of the CCSS; and
 - c. Increase access to and use of available resources related to CCSS.
2. Curriculum and Assessment Enhancements

- a. Strengthen content knowledge directly related to English language arts and mathematics curricula;
- b. Promote ongoing collaboration for REA teachers, administrators, and partners;
- c. Develop a model curriculum framework for English language arts and mathematics for REA K-12 schools; and
- d. Strengthen teachers' assessment literacy and develop an assessment item bank linked to CCSS learning targets.

3. Instructional Enhancements

- a. Strengthen teachers' knowledge and implementation of high-impact instructional strategies;
- b. Promote ongoing reflective practice; and
- c. Develop ongoing support for teachers.

The operational plans put forth from each of the REAs under the terms of the Hess Corporation grant signify the importance of focusing activities around the CCSS, which raise the likelihood of improving overall college- and career-readiness for all students across the state. This grant activity is directed to the REAs whose statutory duties require attending to the educational support services of all school districts statewide. The REAs participate actively in the NDCI's collaborative partners network and hold the potential to leverage substantial influence in generalizing the impact of the CCSS statewide. The Hess Corporation grant affords the state substantial opportunities to implement the CCSS to meet the unique and varied needs of all local school districts.

J. NDDPI Submits Supplemental Budget Requests to 2013 Legislative Assembly to Support CCSS Implementation and Related Improvements

The NDDPI has submitted two separate supplemental budget requests for consideration by the North Dakota Sixty-third Legislative Assembly, which will convene for business in January 2013. This NDDPI supplementary budget request was submitted under the terms of agency budget submissions for eventual review by the North Dakota Office of Management and Budget for final consideration for inclusion within the Governor's 2013-15 biennial budget. Within this budget request, the NDDPI has requested the following:

Request #1: State support for statewide implementation of the Common Core State Standards, \$500,000.

Following discussions with statewide committees of curriculum development specialists and state advisory committees, the Department of Public Instruction requests the investment of \$500,000 into the statewide implementation of the Common Core State Standards for all schools. These standards are based on the Common Core Standards, which have been advanced by the National Governors' Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. The Department of Public Instruction would issue \$500,000 in grants with appropriate external associations (e.g., the North Dakota Curriculum Initiative, the LEAD Center, the Regional Education Associations, and the State University System) to prepare and conduct

various activities that support the longer term roll out and implementation of the state's new content standards.

Request #2: Training and implementation activities for statewide teacher and principal evaluation systems, \$400,000.

Following discussions within the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee, the Department of Public Instruction requests the investment of \$400,000 to provide statewide training and support implementation activities to advance the deployment of new teacher and principal evaluation programs for all districts. The Department would issue grants with appropriate external associations (e.g., the LEAD Center, the North Dakota Curriculum Initiative, and selective leadership districts) to conduct training implementation activities, with the guidance and assistance of the Department.

The NDDPI has sought these supplemental budget requests, mindful of the bounds of budgetary limits and optimizing the likelihood of final approval, to increase the state's and local school districts' capacity to successfully implement the CCSS and other related improvement initiatives, such as the establishment of a statewide teacher and principal evaluation system. The NDDPI continues to seek sufficient funding opportunities to sustain its commitment to implementing the CCSS.

K. Statewide Outreach Efforts to American Indian Students

American Indian students comprise approximately 9% of the student population within North Dakota. American Indian students as a composite subgroup evidence overall academic achievement rates 25 percentage points below those of the overall student populations, indicating significant deficiencies in college- and career-readiness. Since 2011 the NDDPI, in collaboration with the North Dakota Legislative Council's Tribal and State Relations Committee, has studied various approaches to address the foundational causes to this evident deficiency pattern. In June 2012, the NDDPI prepared a series of recommendations to be put before the 2013 Sixty-Third Legislative Assembly as a policy and practice response to the research findings and the apparent achievement gap among the state's American Indian students. These proposals were generated in collaboration with the North Dakota Indian Education Advisory Council (NDIEAC), a statewide committee of American Indian education practitioners and community leaders. These proposals address both the student- and community-level deficiencies that must be faced to ensure optimal improvements in student academic, health, and self-sufficiency indicators among our American Indian students.

In the light of research findings, the NDDPI proposed establishing a competitive pilot grant project (1) to aid integrated community services that support identified at-risk American Indian students and their families and (2) to support collaboration among community-based services.

Summary Findings

Summative research indicates that within the American Indian subgroup statewide,

with specific attention to the state's Indian Reservations, an academic achievement gap exists compared to other demographic subgroups and appears to be directly related to socio-economic factors present in communities where these students live and attend school.

Research gathered nationwide suggests that with appropriate differentiated practices and community level supports, economically disadvantaged students, including American Indian students, can and do reach state-defined achievement standards to levels that rival overall student performance.

Foundational Principles

In the presence of these research findings, the NDDPI, in collaboration with the NDIEAC, proceeded to develop a framework that would advance school- and community-based solutions to raise the level of American Indian students' academic achievement and overall well-being. This proposal framework would integrate various tribal, local, state, and federal resources to provide a better coordinated means

- To create, support, and sustain an environment where local interests can identify specific community needs, develop measurable plans, and implement activities to aid at-risk students in meeting the goal of post-secondary success and success in life;
- To provide social and emotional support to at-risk students that will increase the likelihood of enhancing their levels of safety, positive physical and mental health, social maturity, and overall well-being;
- To provide at-risk students and their families with critical economic and life skills that can sustain a family as a viable economic structure and a self-sustaining source of emotional and social support, whose members actively contribute to and invest in the long term improvement of the local community.

A Proposal for Action

Based on these findings and broad principles developed through NDIEAC discussions, the NDDPI proposed to establish a competitive pilot grant project to aid integrated community services that support identified at-risk American Indian students and their families and to support collaboration among community-based services. This proposal would establish criteria for program success, seek funding from the Sixty-third Legislative Assembly, select through a competitive process a primary pilot location, and provide the means to ensure measurable student post-secondary success and success in life.

As a result of discussions with the NDIEAC, the NDDPI proposed to the State and Tribal Relations Committee that a bill and supporting appropriation request be advanced to the Sixty-third Legislative Assembly to establish a single, competitive pilot grant to support integrated community services to at-risk American Indian students and their families. This competitive pilot grant would advance two primary priorities:

1. to provide integrated school- and community-based educational, health, and social support services for identified at-risk students and their families to aid these at-risk students in meeting the goal of post-secondary success and success in life; and
2. to institute local governance partnerships and service delivery models that enhance, support, and sustain an environment where local service providers can identify specific community needs, develop measurable plans, and implement activities to aid at-risk students and their families.

The purpose of this single pilot grant is to develop and adopt a school- and community-level plan for the envelopment of local supports for identified at-risk students and the overall improvement of a school's and community's capacity to deliver and sustain this effort . Such school and community supports might include

- a means of identifying students who are evidencing deficiencies in school attendance, academic achievement, social connections with peers or family members, physical or mental health indicators, or general indicators of concern;
- a means of working closely with families and local service agencies to provide meaningful, appropriate intervention or remediation services that are designed to further advance positive gains, correct or rehabilitate deficient patterns of behavior or health, provide dedicated academic and career guidance, and provide mentorships or community involvement to actively engage students;
- a means of providing structured case management to advance overall gains in specified student academic, health, social and emotional, and long-term college and career indicators;
- a means to address family and community social or economic conditions that impede individuals' efforts at self-sustaining improvements, and
- a means to establish a system of school- and community-level improvements in the provision of integrated support services to students who are at risk and their families and to advance longer term investments into community improvements, infrastructure, or economic development initiatives that will likely ensure sustainability.

This proposed pilot grant attempts to address both the individual student needs of identified at-risk American Indian students and the structure and efficiency of local service provision by the various public and private agencies that exist to support students and their families. As a primary outcome, the grant seeks increased self-sufficiency of students and their families and the sustainability of local collaboration efforts. This grant opportunity, if determined successful following an evaluation of its overall operations, may prove to be worthy of expanding to additional grant locations, pending legislative review and approval.

Additionally, certain REAs have incorporated within their Hess Corporation

operational plans activities to support the differentiated instruction of American Indian students. Certain professional development opportunities are earmarked for inclusion in regional trainings that review research and provide practical measures to improve American Indian achievement levels. REAs also have identified intensified academic and career counseling services that provide targeted, personal supports for at-risk American Indian students.

The NDDPI is committed to advancing these proposals as systemic offerings. These initiatives offer promise to address various root causes that deter certain at-risk American Indian students from excelling academically and experiencing success in life. These initiatives have been identified as primary priorities within the NDDPI and are intricately compatible with the aims of this ESEA flexibility waiver application's effort to drive meaningful local education reforms.

L. Statewide Surveys Measuring CCSS Implementation Patterns

Since the initial iterative releases of the national CCSS drafts, North Dakota educators have engaged in the gradual process of increasing their awareness and deeper knowledge of the CCSS. The NDDPI made available the various drafts of the national CCSS during their truncated public comment period. The NDDPI received and incorporated these submitted comments within the NDDPI's independent comments. During this time period, educators statewide were introduced to these emerging national standards.

Since the state formally adopted the CCSS as the state's next generation of mathematics and English language arts standards in June 2011, statewide publications and discussions within districts, regions, and various education stakeholders' associations have occurred at increasing frequency and at greater levels of specificity and depth. The NDDPI and the NDCI's statewide committees of content specialists who studied the CCSS especially were mindful of the need to generate meaningful strategies and support materials that might aid districts, schools, and educators transition successfully into the implementation of the CCSS over a two-year period. There existed a clear need to provide tangible material supports before educators could proceed with sufficient clarity and confidence. The NDDPI and the NDCI set as high priorities (1) the development of subject- and grade-level curriculum templates that would provide detailed supports for districts' transition efforts (refer to subsection C above) and (2) the formation of a comprehensive statewide collaborative network of education stakeholders that would optimize shared learning and resources (refer to subsection E above). During 2011-12 a concerted effort was directed to accomplish these two priorities, and the results of these efforts have been received well, with promising prospects for continued improvements and success.

An essential infrastructure of CCSS transitional support materials has been developed and will continue to be embellished through local, state, and national development efforts. With substantive supports now available, the work of local school districts and educators has increased in intensity and with a clearer sense of purpose and goals.

The NDDPI and the NDCI's various advisory and work committees have identified

the need, as a component of the state's overall implementation strategy, to survey local school districts specifically and the state's various education stakeholders additionally regarding the progress, obstacles, and successes local schools are experiencing in their transition and implementation work. These surveys will provide critical information by identifying where educators are experiencing successes and where difficulties are arising. Such survey-based monitoring provides measurable benchmarks and information that can be translated into the development of specific solutions.

Beginning in September 2012, the NDDPI will conduct focused quarterly surveys, directed to the state's various education stakeholders to compile data and anecdotal observations regarding implementation progress. Surveys will focus on certain critical elements of implementation, including assessments of the following:

- Overall awareness of the CCSS among content specialists, all other educators across the school system, and among community stakeholders;
- Level of engagement and completion in aligning local curricula to the CCSS;
- Identified standards that have arisen as potentially problematic content or instructional strategy areas;
- Identification of local, state, or national support materials that have proven to be especially beneficial and worthy of broader dissemination;
- Prioritized identification of areas where professional development supports are needed and the preferred means of delivering such training;
- Recommendations regarding additional supports that would advance educators' overall implementation efforts.

The NDDPI assumes primary responsibility for the management of these quarterly surveys and the dissemination of all compiled results among the state's collaborative partners network. The NDDPI will review these results, identify any local school districts which report challenges in meeting their implementation goals, and offer direct assistance to any such districts to better ensure their ultimate success. The NDDPI will work closely with the NDCI to set priorities, commit resources, and establish aggressive development schedules to meet the need to develop additional material supports. It is ultimately beneficial to engage all collaborative partners into providing solutions to meet any encountered difficulties. It is the desired aim of these periodic surveys to delve deeper into the issues related to the longer term implementation of the CCSS and to dedicate future resources and the contributions of the state's collaborative partners in the improvement of the state's overall success.

- M. Applying the State's Established Model for Student Academic Growth to Compile and Report School and District Achievement Results on the North Dakota State Assessment

The NDDPI seeks approval through this Application to apply the state’s established model for determining student academic growth on the North Dakota State Assessment to compile and report student achievement as an element of the state’s accountability reporting. If approved, individual student achievement on the North Dakota State Assessment will be determined by

- Recognizing as “achieving proficiency” all students who meet or exceed the approved achievement cut score standards for “proficient” or “advanced” set through the state’s established standards-setting process; or
- Recognizing as “achieving proficiency” all students who meet the terms of “proficient by growth” defined by the state’s established growth model, who otherwise have scored “below proficient” by their resulting scale score on the North Dakota State Assessment; or
- Recognizing as “below proficient” all students whose (1) scale scores on the North Dakota State Assessment fall below the approved achievement cut score standards for “proficient” set through the state’s established standards-setting process, and who (2) do not meet the terms of “proficient by growth” defined by the state’s established growth model.

The application of this achievement designation would occur prior to the compilation and reporting of any summative AMO reports as specified in Principle 2 of this Application. The use of this student achievement growth model would be applicable only to student-level achievement determinations.

The NDDPI has studied the application of student growth models since 2008, when the U.S. Department of Education first approved a limited pilot use of student growth models for the purposes of accountability reporting. The NDDPI has not previously applied student academic growth modeling in its accountability determinations, defined by the state’s accountability workbook. The NDDPI is seeking this approved application for the first time.

The NDDPI has adopted a hybrid student growth model, whose application is limited to the North Dakota State Assessment, based on a growth-by-projection and a percentile growth modeled approach. The NDDPI has produced and disseminated student growth reports in mathematics and reading since the 2010-11 administration of the North Dakota State Assessment. The NDDPI has produced and disseminated student growth reports in language arts (writing) since the 2011-12 administration of the North Dakota State Assessments. The NDDPI will initiate in 2012-13 the publication and dissemination of student growth reports in mathematics, reading, and language arts (writing) for every student who participates in the North Dakota Alternate Assessments.

Guidance on the State’s Student Achievement Growth Model

The NDDPI has prepared administrative guidance regarding the use and interpretation of the state’s student academic growth models to assist educators and the public understand its components and possible uses in monitoring student achievement patterns over time.

- The administrative guidance for the student-level achievement growth reports can be accessed at the following web address:
<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/assess/growth/report.pdf>;
- The administrative guidance for the school-level composite achievement growth reports of students' within a school can be accessed at the following web address: <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/assess/growth/roster.pdf>.

The NDDPI has prepared a multi-part collection of training modules for educators and the public to better understand the components of the state's student achievement growth model. These training modules also provide suggestions regarding the manner in which these reports might aid educators, parents, and students better understand a student's individual achievement trending and set a course for remediation if students' growth indicates certain deficiencies. These training modules can be accessed at the following web address:
http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/assess/growth_projection_reports.shtm.

Applying Student Growth Prior within State Accountability Reporting

The NDDPI proposes to recognize the "achieving proficiency" classification defined above for the purposes of compiling and reporting school and district accountability reports, including school-level AMO accountability reports. The use of this student achievement growth model would be applicable only to student-level achievement determinations. Student reports would clearly identify the actual scale score and achievement level a student may have earned on the North Dakota State Assessment and then whether any growth model determination may have been applicable. Any resulting summative school reports would clearly present for every student their actual North Dakota State Assessment results and then, if applicable, any growth model determinations. When the NDDPI then compiles and reports summative achievement rate results for the purposes of AMO accountability reporting, the NDDPI will incorporate any applicable growth model determinations to compile and report "achieving proficiency" rates. The NDDPI will identify the number and percentage of "achieving proficiency" students who met this achievement level by meeting or achieving the standard, or by meeting the growth model determination definition. The NDDPI will compile and report in its annual Profile Reports for schools, districts, and the state, student achievement rates as presented above.

Student growth has emerged as a legitimate means of understanding student achievement and its trending. Student growth reports combine a detailed summary of a student's overall historical achievement data with graphic charts that offer a more intuitive presentation of trending patterns. Student growth models recognize the oftentimes unique patterns in individual student's maturation. Student growth models combine annual achievement with measures of longer term improvements (or setbacks) in a student's overall performance. Student growth models responsibly place more information on each individual student's progression, thereby enhancing diagnostic and remediation activities by teachers, parents, and the students themselves. Student growth models recognize and award individual student's progress when this progress indicates a reasonable opportunity for reaching their longer terms goal of high academic achievement.

The NDDPI seeks approval to incorporate student growth model determinations within its accountability reporting as an overt statement of commitment to advance and recognize legitimate student growth. This proposal provides a means to provide feedback to students regarding their actual student growth trending with supporting illustrations. This proposal provides additional information and incentives to educators to integrate growth information into their diagnostic and remediation activities. Incorporating growth information into the state's accountability system underscores the importance of this information and formally recognizes this importance. This proposal provides tangible value to the state's accountability system.

N. Revised Measurements of Effectiveness for Preparing English Language Learners for College and Careers.

The NDDPI seeks uniformity in the manner in which ESEA Title I accountability reporting and ESEA Title III AMAO 3 accountability reporting reference common school achievement indicators. Within this Application the NDDPI is proposing to establish clear and consistent school achievement reporting based on a newly defined annual measurable objective (AMO) as declared in Principle 2.A of this Application. The NDDPI seeks to establish within its ESEA Title III AMAO3 reporting method a replacement of the current adequate yearly progress references with the new ESEA Title I AMO method. Such a proposed change requires a waiver of ESEA Title III AMAO 3 requirements, since this Application's foundational waiver restrictions do not allow the consideration of any ESEA Title III AMAO3 waiver proposals.

Given the clear connection of the effect of the state's newly defined AMO method arising from this Application, the NDDPI seeks special consideration and approval of its request to apply the results of any ESEA Title I AMO method to the school AMAO determinations set forth within ESEA Title III AMAO 3 requirements. Such special consideration will expedite the state's efforts to provide for a comprehensive accountability system across related Titles and programs and will remove unintended conflicts among program administration efforts. This reconciliation of accountability provisions would appear to be consistent with the principles stated within the ED guidance and the effect of generalizing meaningful, consistent educational reform.

The NDDPI provides assurance that it will continue its efforts to monitor, track, and study the language acquisition and academic progression of all ELL students to better discern longer term instructional supports. The NDDPI will track the progression of (1) current ELL students, (2) former ELL students who have exited from ELL services within the past two years, and (3) former ELL students who have exited from ELL services for more than two years. Analyzing the progression patterns of all ELL students, both current and past, will provide to local schools relevant information which may provide insight regarding effective instructional programming. Such studies will better track the instructional approaches that are most likely to move ELL students along the path for college and career readiness.

O. State Law Requires College- and Career-Readiness Assessments for All High School Students to Better Ensure Student Success

In 2009 following a two-year study by a statutory Commission on Education Improvement, the North Dakota Sixty-first Legislative Assembly passed and the Governor signed House Bill 1400, which enacted series of statewide educational reforms. Certain provisions were further enacted or amended in 2011 within House Bill 2150 by the North Dakota Sixty-second Legislative Assembly, following an additional two-year study of the Commission on Education Improvement. Among its various provisions, H.B. 1400 authorized the administration of certain college- and career-readiness assessments for all eleventh grade students as an additional means of measuring students' readiness for college or career options, in addition to the North Dakota State Assessment which is based on the state's academic content standards. This policy effectively established multiple assessments to measure and validate student readiness, to link high school preparations with college entrance expectations, and to provide clarity and incentives to students to better focus their academic preparations toward either college or career success.

North Dakota Century Code (15.1-21-19; <http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c21.pdf>) specifies that each public and nonpublic school student in grade eleven shall take the ACT, including the writing test, or three WorkKeys assessments recommended by the Department of Career and Technical Education and approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Each student determines which summative assessment to take. The student's school district of residence is responsible for the cost of one summative assessment and its administration per student.

The student's career advisor or guidance counselor is required to meet with the student to review the student's assessment results. A school administrator may exempt a student from these assessment requirements if taking the test is not required by the student's individualized education program plan or if other special circumstances exist. These assessments are funded by the NDDPI and afford every student the opportunity to receive an evaluation of their readiness for college or career training. Approximately 97% of all students in eleventh grade participate in the assessments. The provision of this assessment is also extended to students, under age 21 who are pursuing a general educational development diploma. These required summative assessments provide additional student achievement information to better inform students and educators on college- and career-readiness expectations and provide current achievement trends, in addition to the North Dakota State Assessment.

Scores obtained from the ACT have historically provided colleges and universities with an estimation of a student's academic achievement level and the likelihood of successfully entering and engaging academically in the first year of college. Scores from the ACT are often used as a partial placement metric into introductory college courses. Benchmark scores are provided by ACT to reflect the minimum test scores needed to achieve a 50 percent prediction of achieving a grade of B, or higher, or a 75% percent prediction of a grade of C or higher, in entry-level credit-bearing college English, Algebra, Social Science, and Biology courses.

The state's policy of providing for the administration of the ACT or WorkKeys for all eleventh grade students has offered additional measures and incentives to support student academic achievement and linkage for college and career education opportunities following the completion of a student's K-12 education. As the state's next generation of statewide college- and career-readiness assessments becomes available in 2014-15, the state's capacity to provide for a uniformly aligned, standards-based set of assessments, spanning grades 3-8, and 11, minimally, will provide for a coherent system of college- and career- ready standards and assessments. As this next generation of the North Dakota State Assessment aligned to the CCSS becomes available, the results generated from these assessments will be referenced by the North Dakota University System, in part, as a element in determining the eligibility and placement of students within the System's various institutions of higher education. The 2010 agreement among the North Dakota University System and its institutions of higher education to honor the CCSS-aligned state assessments as a means of determining entry and placement among the institutions is evidenced in Attachment 5.

P. State Law Establishes College and Career Scholarships that Define Academic Expectations and Reward Academic Achievement

In an effort to establish and support college- and career-readiness expectations and incentives, the North Dakota Sixty-first Legislative Assembly passed and the Governor signed into law House Bill 1400, which included the establishment of two separate statewide programs that award partial college or career scholarships to high school students who demonstrate high academic achievement and successfully complete a rigorous course of study. North Dakota Century Code 15.1-21-02.4; (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c21.pdf>) established the North Dakota Technical Education Scholarship for students who pursue career training following high school. North Dakota Century Code 15.1-21.-02.5 (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c21.pdf>) established the North Dakota Academic Scholarship for students who pursue college education following high school. These scholarships may be applied to the education costs incurred at two- and four-year colleges and universities throughout North Dakota. Various academic achievement measures are considered in awarding scholarships to eligible students in both scholarship programs, including

- Completion of the required number of graduation unit credits, including certain defined rigorous courses of study;
- Obtaining at least a minimal defined cumulative grade;
- Receiving at least a composite score of twenty-four on the ACT or a score of at least five on each of three WorkKeys assessments for the North Dakota's Technical Education Scholarship; or receiving at least a composite score of twenty-four on the ACT for the North Dakota's Academic Scholarship, and
- Completion of at least one unit of an Advanced Placement course and examination or a dual-credit college course.

The state's two college- and career-based scholarships establish clearly defined standards for academic achievement, guide students toward rigorous courses of study, apply consistently rigorous measures for the awarding of scholarships, and

provide understandable incentives to students to apply their talents and benefit from their efforts. These scholarships extend and offer tangible supports to the state's overarching interest in advancing academic expectations for excellence.

There exists strong support for the continuation of these scholarship programs.

Q. The State Standardizes Dual-Credit Management and Recording Requirements

For many years, high schools and institutions of higher education within North Dakota have cooperated in establishing and offering a growing roster of dual-credit courses for high school students. Dual-credit courses have grown in popularity and provide an important component in raising the level of course offerings for motivated students and for increasing the standard for rigor for certain academic course offerings. The evolution of this practice has emphasized historically the independent nature of each credit-awarding institution of higher education and has resulted in various credit-awarding practices.

In 2012 the NDDPI and the North Dakota University System jointly developed policy to institute uniform administrative procedures among all K-12 schools and individual institutions of higher education statewide to ensure the proper management of dual credit course enrollment, effective with the 2012-13 academic year. Under this policy, the requirements that govern the enrollment of students within dual college and high school credit courses will be based on achieving a designated minimum score on any of the following assessments: ACT, SAT, COMPASS, PLAN, or CollegeBoard Accuplacer. Every successfully completed three- or four- semester hour college class will be awarded one-half unit of high school credit, in addition to the designated college credit. A completed five-semester hour college class will be awarded one unit of high school credit, in addition to the designated college credit. The grade reported on the high school transcript will be identical to the grade reported on the college transcript.

R. State Law Requires Interim Assessments for All Students and Advances CCSS Alignment

In 2009 following a two-year study by a statutory Commission on Education Improvement, the North Dakota Sixty-first Legislative Assembly passed and the Governor signed House Bill 1400, which enacted series of statewide educational reforms. Certain provisions were further enacted or amended in 2011 within House Bill 2150 by the North Dakota Sixty-second Legislative Assembly, following an additional two-year study of the Commission on Education Improvement. Among its various provisions, H.B. 1400 established a requirement for local school districts to administer interim achievement assessments within designated grade levels for all public schools. North Dakota Century Code (15.1-21-17; <http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c21.pdf>) specifies that each school district shall administer annually to students in grades two through ten the Measures of Academic Progress test or any other interim assessment approved by the superintendent of public instruction. Local school districts may seek to administer any interim assessment that will advance its academic assessment system and that is approved by the NDDPI. This practice of administering interim assessments will

continue under state law when the CCSS are implemented.

Effective in the 2012-13 academic year, the NDDPI will compile and disseminate to local school districts the various valid and reliable interim assessments that are provided by assessment vendors that are demonstrated to be aligned in depth and breadth to the CCSS. The NDDPI will release a nationwide Request for Information (RFI) notification seeking any and all qualified submissions from vendors that certify to their corporate qualifications, demonstration of product sufficiency, and evidence of capacity to deliver a suite of assessments that are aligned to the CCSS at the specified grade and subject levels. The NDDPI will release the products of this general RFI to all local school districts for their review and possible action.

The NDDPI will prepare general guidance to assist local school districts in establishing a strategy to review their current local interim assessment practices, reviewing prospective interim assessment models to meet the local school districts strategic planning, and adopting and deploying a final interim assessment model. Foundational within this voluntary guidance, the NDDPI will emphasize the need to scrutinize and validate any vendor's claims of alignment to the CCSS and review proposals for the manner in which they summarize, disaggregate, and report final student achievement results, such that these reports present meaningful achievement status and growth information. These interim assessments may be used by local school districts during the 2013-14 academic year and later, dependent on the ultimate development and deployment of standards-aligned interim assessments within the national assessment consortia projects.

In the event that the national assessment consortia projects do produce valid and reliable, standards-based interim assessments, the NDDPI will provide specific guidance regarding the design and administration of these interim assessments. Additionally, the NDDPI will initiate state procurement protocols with the assistance of a statewide advisory committee to review all national interim assessment models that meet the specifications set forth by the NDDPI. The NDDPI will then proceed toward a final determination either to select one statewide interim assessment model or to provide a list of certified vendors made available to local school districts for their determinations. The NDDPI will advance the use of such CCSS-aligned interim assessments during the 2013-14 academic year as a means of linking the older state assessment system with the new system that will become operational in 2014-15.

The NDDPI has identified the provision of valid, reliable, and CCSS-aligned interim assessments as a critical component of the state's overall assessment strategy.

- S. North Dakota Participates within the ASSETS Assessment Consortium to Develop the Next Generation of CCSS-Aligned of English Language Proficiency Assessments.

In 2011 the Assessment Services Supporting ELs through Technology Systems (ASSETS) Project was awarded a four-year, \$10.5 million Enhanced Assessment Grant to build a comprehensive and balanced technology-based assessment system for English language learners. The assessment system will be anchored in WIDA's English Language Proficiency Standards that are aligned with the Common Core

State Standards, informed by rigorous ongoing research, and supported by comprehensive professional development and outreach. WIDA will maintain its consortium approach to decision-making regarding the design and direction of the project and will involve the expertise of nationally renowned partners. ASSETS will integrate technology-based assessments and professional development in an innovative and comprehensive system that aligns with state CCSS academic standards and is compatible with other academic assessment systems. The comprehensive and balanced ASSETS assessment system will be in place by the end of the 2014-15 school year and will include an annual summative assessment as well as an on-demand screener. The states within this consortium have also agreed to develop a common definition of an English Language Learner student, to use a common Home Language Survey, and to recognize a common score on the assessment as the exit point (the score that shows the point in which a student is no longer denied linguistic access to education due to the influence a language other than English). NDDPI will continue to offer professional development in the areas of test administration, implementation of the assessment products and effective use of test results leading up to and during this transition period.

T. The State Provides Guidance and Support Materials to Advance Student Accessibility and Accommodations Regarding CCSS-based Curricula, Instruction, and Assessment

It is the long-standing policy of the state that students be granted the full entitlement of universal access to the general curricula, any appropriate accommodations required to fully engage in this curricula, and full participation in the administration of the North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA) or any appropriate modifications provided within the North Dakota Alternate Assessments (NDAA), as specified within a student's individualized education program. The state's general accommodations policy guidelines will remain in effect for North Dakota students and will be carried forward within the administration of the CCSS and any forthcoming statewide assessment system designed to support the CCSS. Any accommodations provided to a student during testing are to be consistent with the instructional supports provided to the student by the school during the normative delivery of instruction, unless otherwise specified by the nature of certain assessments of limited content.

Although most student-specific accommodations are appropriate for and integral to instruction, certain accommodations may not be appropriate for use on the state's NDSA or NDAA used for accountability purposes under the No Child Left Behind Act, as specified under federal regulation. The state's accommodations policies will carry forward to the new CCSS-aligned achievement assessment systems, unless specifically stipulated. These accommodations policies extend to students entitled to such accommodations within limited and specified application, for the following students:

- students with disabilities served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);
- students provided services under the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and

- students with limited English proficiency (LEP) served under an alternative language Program.

The state's policies on general accommodations are published in Appendix C of the *North Dakota State Assessment's Test Coordinator's Manual* which can be accessed at the following website address:

<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/assess/manual.pdf>. During 2009-10 the NDDPI participated in a general study and review of the state's general accommodations policies and procedures facilitated by the George Washington University Center for Education Equity and Excellence. This multi-state study analyzed the balance, clarity, and validity of the state's accommodations policies as specified within its annual *Test Coordinator's Manual*. Following the completion of this study, the NDDPI revised its accommodations policies to reflect better current research-based practices. The NDDPI asserts that the state's current accommodations policies are valid, consistent with existing federal guidance, and represent current best practices in the administration of assessments.

Any accommodations provided within the administration of the NDSA or NDAA must meet the following criteria:

- provide equitable access during assessments;
- mitigate effects of a student's disability or limited English proficiency;
- do not reduce learning or achievement expectations;
- do not change the construct being assessed;
- do not compromise the integrity or validity of the test; and
- result in valid, meaningful testing results.

As a rule, every student is entitled to receive the full benefit of a comfortable, educationally appropriate setting that allows him or her opportunity to concentrate and perform optimally. All students are entitled to complete the assessment in a setting that is familiar to them, well lighted, and quiet. Students should be provided comfortable workstations, a relaxed testing schedule, frequent breaks, and the presence of a competent test administrator.

Designated school professionals with appropriate knowledge and experience determine proper accommodations on an individual student basis:

- For a student with disabilities, the IEP team has this responsibility;
- For students eligible under Section 504, the Section 504 team has this responsibility;
- For students with limited English proficiency, an instructional team with personnel knowledgeable about the student and appropriate services has this responsibility.

State Participation in National Assessment Consortia Development Efforts.

The state is currently a member-in-good-standing within three separate assessment consortia, which includes general and alternate assessment development: the PARCC, the NCSC, and the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortia. These three multistate consortia were awarded funding from the U.S. Department of

Education to develop an assessment system based on the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS). To achieve the goal that all students leave high school ready for college and career, these three consortia are committed to ensuring that assessment and instruction embody the CCSS and that all students, regardless of disability, language, or subgroup status, have the opportunity to learn this valued content and show what they know and can do. The assessment system will be field tested in the 2013-2014 school year and administered live for the first time during the 2014-2015 school year. Refer to Attachment 6, which provides the evidentiary memoranda of agreement between the state and the various assessment consortia.

With strong support from member states, institutions of higher education, and industry, these three consortia have been progressing in the development of a balanced set of measures and tools, each designed to serve specific purposes, including summative and interim assessments, administrative support tools, and resources to advance meaningful professional development. Together, these components will provide student data throughout the academic year that will inform instruction, guide interventions, help target professional development, and ensure an accurate measure of each student's progress toward career and college readiness. The NDDPI stipulates to the developmental alignment studies conducted by each respective assessment consortium that documents these assessments alignment to the CCSS.

The state is a participating member within the PARCC and SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortia and a governing member within the NCSC Consortium. As defined in the these respective consortium's governance documents, each state is required to take an appropriately active role in supporting the work of the consortium, this participation may include, depending on the specific consortium, some of the following activities:

- Is a member of the Executive Committee
- Is a member of a designated work group(s)

Each assessment consortium has pursued a selective set of core criteria, including the development of summative, interim, and formative elements appropriate to the design of each consortium. Among the elements that these consortia are addressing includes the need to provide clear and appropriate practices regarding accessibility to all elements of CCSS-based instruction and assessment, including valid and reliable accommodations practices that are properly suited to the unique educational needs of student with disabilities, English language learners, or other specified special needs students.

NDDPI has been actively involved in developing appropriate policies and practices regarding accessibility and accommodations, specifically within the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, and has served as a contributing member within the consortium's accessibility and accommodations subcommittee. The NDDPI has similarly benefitted from its participation in the PARCC and NCSC assessment consortia as they have similarly progressed in developing appropriate policies and practices. The NDDPI will continue to participate accordingly in this activity.

The NDDPI provides assurances that it will incorporate any final accessibility and

accommodations policies and practices that result from the national assessment consortia's development process. All consortia are advancing comparably balanced and clear accommodations policies, which will result in more coherent policies, nationwide. The NDDPI will revise its current standing accommodations policies in light of the final national consortia's accommodations documents. The NDDPI will publish and disseminate final accessibility and accommodations policies and practices, and provide technical assistance regarding their implementation, approximately by 2013-14 in anticipation of the state's first administration of new CCSS-based assessments in 2014-15.

U. State Provides for Student-centered Counseling and Related Support Services

In recent years the state has invested substantial resources into ensuring the provision of student-centered counseling and related support services to students statewide at all levels of K-12 education. These student counseling and related support services are properly integral to the statewide adoption of the CCSS and the concomitant improvements to curricular design and instructional strategies. The emergence of integrated, statewide counseling service improvements has been the product of a long-standing collaboration between the North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education, the North Dakota University System, the NDDPI, and various education stakeholders, as a component of the state's ongoing P-20 education initiatives.

In 2009 following a two-year study by a statutory Commission on Education Improvement, the North Dakota Sixty-first Legislative Assembly passed and the Governor signed House Bill 1400, which enacted series of statewide educational reforms. Certain provisions were further enacted or amended in 2011 within House Bill 2150 by the North Dakota Sixty-second Legislative Assembly, following an additional two-year study of the Commission on Education Improvement. Certain provisions were further enacted or amended in 2011 within House Bill 2150 by the North Dakota Sixty-second Legislative Assembly, following an additional two-year study of the Commission on Education Improvement. Among its various provisions, H.B. 1400 revised student-to-counselor ratio requirements for local school districts to improve the frequency and quality of student counseling services. North Dakota Century Code 15.1-06-19 (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c06.pdf>) requires that beginning with the 2010-11 school year, each school district must make available one full-time equivalent counselor for every three hundred students in grades seven through twelve. This newly defined student-to-counselor ratio improved the previous one counselor for every four hundred fifty student ratio.

Student counselors provide direct academic, career, and education support assistance to students to ensure that all students remain on track to achieve their academic and career success goals. These student counseling services are critical to supporting the ultimate aims of the state to successfully implement the CCSS.

North Dakota Century Code 15.1-06-20 (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c06.pdf>) provides for school career advisors to offer sequential career development activities, current career information, and related career exploration opportunities to students in grades seven through twelve. A career advisor is to incorporate computer-assisted career guidance systems and to work at the

direction and under the supervision of the school district's counseling staff. A career advisor is an optional services provided by local school districts.

North Dakota Century Code 15.1-21-18.3 (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c21.pdf>) requires that each school district notify its high school students that, upon request, a student is entitled to receive a consultative review of the student's individual high school education plan at least once during each high school grade. Upon the request of a student, the school district will provide the consultative review.

North Dakota Century Code 15.1-21-18.1 (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c21.pdf>) requires a school district to administer to students, once during their enrollment in grade seven or eight and once during their enrollment in grade nine or ten, a career interest inventory recommended by the department of career and technical education and approved by the superintendent of public instruction.

North Dakota Century Code 15.1-21-18.2 (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c21.pdf>) requires that least once during the seventh or eighth grade, each school district will arrange for students to participate in either an individual consultative process or a nine-week course, for the purpose of discussing the results of their career interest inventory, selecting high school courses appropriate to their educational pursuits and career interests, and developing individual high school education plans.

North Dakota Century Code 15.1-21-19.2 (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c21.pdf>) requires that a student's career advisor or guidance counselor will meet with the student to review the student's ACT or WorkKeys assessment results during Grade 12.

Effective in 2012, the NDDPI adopted for use in North Dakota K-12 schools the *American School Counseling Association (ASCA) National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs*. This national school counseling model is established on the three domains of academic, career and personal/social development services. This model provides every student with a strong foundation for success while in school and assists students with their development as contributing members of society. This model guides the statewide counseling efforts and demonstrates a commitment to high achievement for every student.

The state's counseling and related student services policies integrate a student's academic, career, and personal development interests systemically and are predicated on raising the quality and rigor of a student's longer-term expectations for success and well-being. The integration of support services to academic and career expectations is critical to any successful implementation of the CCSS and is reflective of the state's foundational educational values.

V. State Raises High School Graduation Diploma Requirements and Other Curriculum Offerings

Spanning a period of many years, the North Dakota Department of Career and

Technical Education, the North Dakota University System, the NDDPI, and various education stakeholders, as members of the state's ongoing P-20 education study group, have studied and advocated raising the state's graduation diploma requirements. These discussions centered on better aligning the state's interest in increasing the quality and rigor of academic offerings statewide and respecting the responsibilities of local school districts. In 2009 following a two-year study by a statutory Commission on Education Improvement, the North Dakota Sixty-first Legislative Assembly passed and the Governor signed House Bill 1400, which enacted series of statewide educational reforms. Certain provisions were further enacted or amended in 2011 within House Bill 2150 by the North Dakota Sixty-second Legislative Assembly, following an additional two-year study of the Commission on Education Improvement. Among its various provisions, H.B. 1400 updated and raised the state's graduation diploma requirements, including an increased attention to the core curriculum and career education.

North Dakota Century Code 15.1-21-02.1 and 15.1-21-02.3.1 (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c21.pdf>) raised the minimum required number of academic course units to twenty-two for every student and revised the distribution of course unit requirements across the curriculum, with the allowance for additional optional course selections. Local school districts are allowed to increase this minimum graduation diploma requirement by specifying additional local course requirements. Certain higher level mathematics and English language arts requirements were enacted, including the specification of certain advanced course offerings.

The raising of the state's graduation diploma requirements provides a structural support for the implementation of the CCSS by specifying an increased attention to the rigor of the high school curriculum.

As outlined in subsection P of this Application, the state has established academic and career scholarship opportunities that provide financial supports to higher achieving academic- and career-focused students. Additionally, as outlined in subsections O and R of this Application, the state has established additional summative and interim assessments that provide academic supports to schools and establish clearer links between K-12 and higher education expectations for excellence. These initiatives offer additional supports to the state's efforts to implement the CCSS and provide a platform to further clarify the academic and career expectations upon which the CCSS is structured.

North Dakota Century Code 15.1-27-19 (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c27.pdf>) expands the number and types of academic remediation support services and courses provided by local school districts that are eligible for direct reimbursement by the state.

North Dakota Century Code 15.1-21 (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c21.pdf>) ensures that every local school district will include within its curriculum personal finance content offerings.

North Dakota Century Code 15.1-22-01 (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c22.pdf>) expanded and clarified the provision of kindergarten to all students statewide.

The recent education improvement initiatives of the state's Commission on Education Improvement and the actions of the Sixty-first and Sixty-second Legislative Assemblies, in addition to the long-standing constitutional assurances contained within the body of state education law, demonstrates the state's interest in advancing the quality and rigor of its statewide education system. The state's commitment to adopt and implement the CCSS further raises this level of quality and rigor.

W. The North Dakota University System Initiates Systemic Reforms to Increase Student Success

The North Dakota State Board of Higher Education has expressed its intent to provide for a more efficient and transparent system of higher education. In response to this policy goal, the Office of the Chancellor has prepared and is proceeding to develop a series of initiatives that will ensure system-wide improvements in access, quality, affordability, learning, and accountability which impact all the various institutions of higher education and their relations with the K-12 education system. Many of these initiatives, outlined within the *North Dakota University System Three-Tier Access Conceptual Plan: A Mission Driven System Focused on Student Success* (circulated draft document), address points of study conducted in the state's longer-term P-20 studies.

Access

Under the Chancellor's proposals, the North Dakota University System differentiates three types of institutions of higher education and their respective missions: community colleges, regional universities, and the state's research universities. The proposal establishes a three-tiered set of admission standards that reflect the distinctive missions of the institutions. The proposal advances a criteria based admission index comprised of high school grade point average, high school percentile rank, the number of courses completed in the core subject areas, and the ACT composite score. When implemented, high school students would track their success via the internet and thereby monitor their progress toward admission into their intended institutions. Student readiness would be linked with the appropriate institutional mission and resources and admission standards would be consistent within each level of institution. Overall student success would be ensured by assisting students in choosing the right institution. Community colleges would remain open access for any high school and GED graduates. Regional and research universities would begin with the same academic subject/course admissions expectations. Research institutions would also list preferred courses (i.e., additional mathematics and science courses, etc.) with a required timeline for implementation. This differentiation of service would increase transparency regarding school selection and readiness and increase the likelihood of achieving academic preparedness and post-secondary success.

Quality

Under the Chancellor's proposals, the North Dakota University System will develop a North Dakota high school-to-college success report to provide to parents,

educators, and policymakers feedback on how K-12 students perform at the postsecondary level. The objective of the report is to ensure alignment between secondary and postsecondary standards and expectations. These high school-to-college success reports would include information important to high schools regarding the overall preparedness of their graduates, including success in entry level credit-bearing courses and first to second year overall college retention of students. This information would be readily available to parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, and political leadership. These reports would be managed in part through the state's longitudinal data system.

Affordability

Under the Chancellor's proposals, the state would expand the present financial aid program to include more need-based aid as well as support for the adult learner population, many of whom have a considerable portion of their degree program already completed but, for various reasons, left school. The objective of this initiative is to increase college success among all groups, while remaining affordable. If the state is to meet the anticipated higher level of qualifications required of future jobs, the state's higher education institutions must engage students at all levels and work to make college more affordable. To accomplish this the state's university system must refine state-funded merit based aid to more effectively retain needed talent in the state, expand state and campus financial aid to include more need-based aid, create means of providing credit for life and military experience, accelerating learning opportunities for adult learners by expediting the path to graduation, assisting non-completed students to find their path to completing their degree, and expanding need-based financial aid programs to include part-time students.

Learning

Under the Chancellor's proposals, the state's higher education institutions would work to assist students who enter college unprepared for the level and intensity of coursework expected at the state's four-year regional and research institutions. In addition to the Access initiatives addressed earlier, the Chancellor's proposal recommends that all remedial and developmental courses become the responsibility of the community colleges, including any and all courses delivered at the four-year regional and research institutions. To the extent that community colleges assume this responsibility for remediation courses, the four-year regional and research universities would then redirect their remedial/developmental course costs to strengthening their student academic support services as a means of improving student retention and graduation rates.

The state's university system will advance the work of ensuring student readiness by assisting in the implementation of the CCSS in K-12 education, ensure that remedial coursework is in alignment with entry-level college courses, increase effectiveness of student academic support services to improve student retention, and align dual credit delivery around campus mission and create standards to ensure course quality.

Community colleges will assume responsibility for all remedial courses for the regional and research universities; offer courses on site at regional and research

university campuses; work with public high schools to better align their curriculum; establish standardized common course outcomes, assessment standards, and pricing strategies for all remedial courses. Community colleges will also assume primary responsibility for the provision of dual credit courses using a uniform set of criteria. Exceptions will be made for special programs offered by the four-year regional campuses, based on the Chancellor's approval.

The state's university system will continue to assist the Department of Public Instruction in curriculum alignment between high school courses and entry-level credit-bearing college courses, work with select faculty work groups to develop a pre-service and inservice professional development program on the CCSS, work with teacher education programs to ensure future teachers are adequately prepared to meet the CCSS, and advise the Department of Public Instruction regarding the selection of an appropriate new college and career readiness state assessment.

Accountability

Under the Chancellor's proposal, the state's university system would institute system-wide uniformity for the ratio of in- and out-of-state tuition charged to students. Undergraduate tuition-waiver practices would be standardized limiting institutions to total reduction not to exceed a designated amount of the undergraduate tuition income for the previous fiscal year. Separate strategies and budget provisions would be established to attract top quality graduate research and teaching assistants. This proposal would establish total transparency in the area of college costs so that students, parents, and public officials can know the true cost of education. This proposal would develop a per credit hour tuition model differentiated by select programs and institutional mission, providing a uniform charging model across all delivery types. Long-term rates would be further differentiated based on graduated admission policies among the three-tier institutions.

This series of proposals under development from the North Dakota University System represents a means of advancing education reform efforts across the P-20 system. These proposals encompass the effect of K-12 standards-based curriculum, instruction, and ultimate student achievement levels; clarity of college-level achievement expectations; responsible college admissions practices that better ensure student success; delivery of college remediation course offerings; feedback to the K-12 education system regarding student college achievement outcomes; collaboration between K-12 and higher education institutions regarding the definition and alignment of college-entry achievement standards; mutual support for the professional development of all education specialists; and an uncompromising response to increase transparency of policy and practices for all education stakeholders statewide.

These reform proposals from the North Dakota University System, which are pending final approval from the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education provide assurances that the state's efforts to adopt and implement the CCSS and its associated reforms will be successful.

Additionally, as developed in previous subsections, the North Dakota University System has agreed within the 2010 agreement among the North Dakota University

System and its institutions of higher education to honor the CCSS-aligned North Dakota State Assessment as a means of determining entry and placement among the institutions is evidenced in Attachment. This agreement to reference the CCSS-aligned state assessments for the purposes of determining entry and placement eligibility constitutes a meaningful aligning of P-20 efforts to the CCSS.

X. Statewide Education Stakeholders Commit Resources to Providing High-Quality Professional Development Regarding the CCSS

Across the responses within Principle 1(B) of this Application, the narrative has presented a wide variety of professional development initiatives that have been integrated within the state's efforts to implement the CCSS. The NDDPI has worked extensively to build a statewide collaborative response to the adoption and implementation of the CCSS and to diffuse the responsibility for certain implementation activities, including the provision of professional development, among all the state's education stakeholders. If the state is to succeed in its implementation of the CCSS, then it will be because this statewide collaboration of stakeholders has assumed critical roles in specifically developing and conducting professional development relevant to the many needs of their constituents. The NDDPI has invested its resources to build this collaborative of stakeholders and to provide a meaningful structure around which to conduct high-quality professional development.

The NDCI and its collaborative partners network have developed a cooperative agreement to advance CCSS-based professional development among their various stakeholder groups. The NDCI has created a three-prong strategy to pursue CCSS-based reforms, including the development of the Academy for Formative Instruction and Assessment as a core professional development initiative. The NDDPI has obligated various federal discretionary funds to support this effort. Refer to subsection X for an overview of this extensive professional development work.

The state's regional education associations (REA) have adopted CCSS professional development as a mission-critical element of their service to their constituent local districts. The state's REAs, through statutory responsibility, assume the duty to provide coherent professional development within their region including training on the CCSS, the development and implementation of standards-based curricula, and the practice of differentiated, formative instruction. This concerted effort among the REAs has been enhanced further through the awarding of supplementary Hess Corporation grant awards to expand the implementation of the CCSS among all schools. Refer to subsection X of this Application for an overview of this dedicated professional development work.

The North Dakota University System has developed proposals to provide university-based professional development to K-12 educators regarding the implementation of the CCSS among other related topics, as a part of the university system's newly announced reform measures. The university system is an active member of the NDCI collaborative partners network and has sponsored several statewide organizational meetings within this past year to inform and solicit the cooperation of university staffs regarding the implementation of the CCSS. The university has also aided in the organization of "Ed Camps" that convene university professors and K-

12 educators within organized content and instructional training modules directed to the CCSS. The university system's NDCI subcommittee has stated its intent to continue and expand the network of these EdCamps during this CCSS transition and implementation period. Refer to subsection W of this Application for an overview of this dedicated professional development work.

State law requires local school districts to provide the time, financial resources, and professional development programming opportunities to its educators to ensure the overall improvement of curriculum and instruction statewide. Since the adoption of the state's new content standards based on the CCSS, local school districts have worked independently, organized with other similarly directed school districts, participated with the established REA initiatives, and/or engaged in other state sponsored conferences to align their local curricula and instructional support strategies to the CCSS. Anecdotal evidence indicates that these local implementation efforts have been proceeding steadily and have been supported by the various NDCI curriculum template materials, REA-sponsored activities, or other national material outlets. The NDDPI will initiate statewide surveys of these professional development activities beginning in the fall 2012. Refer to subsection X of Principle 1(B) of this Application for an overview of this dedicated professional development survey work.

The state's various education stakeholder associations, who also participate as members of the NDCI collaborative partners network, have sponsored numerous statewide convocations and regional meetings to advance overall awareness and the active implementation of the CCSS among their members. These different CCSS professional development events have explored the CCSS from divergent perspectives and have underscored the pluralistic approaches to exploring the CCSS. The following represents a sampling of the statewide or regional professional development events that have been sponsored this past year across the state. Each of these statewide and regional gatherings demonstrates the diversity of interest and approach and a shared commitment to implement successfully the CCSS.

- Statewide Title I Conference;
- Statewide Title I Program Improvement Conference;
- Fall Statewide Association of School Administrators Conference;
- Statewide North Dakota Education Association Conference;
- Winter Statewide Association of School Administrators Conference;
- Winter Statewide Elementary Education Administrators Conference;
- Statewide North Dakota Reading Association Conference;
- Statewide North Dakota Mathematics Association Conference;
- Statewide NDCI Collaborative Partners Network Conference;
- Statewide Special Education Directors Conference;
- Statewide Joint Boards Meeting of the Department of Public Instruction, Department of Career and Technical Education, Education Standards and Practices Board, and the North Dakota University System;
- Statewide Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Advisory Committee;
- State ESEA Planning Committee Meetings;
- North Dakota School Boards Association statewide communications;
- North Dakota Council of Education Leaders statewide communications;

- NDDPI Title I and Special Education statewide communications;
- Hess Corporation Grant technical assistance conferences for Regional Education Associations; and
- Other unspecified stakeholder gatherings.

The state's education stakeholders have committed themselves to conduct professional development activities that emphasize content relevant to their membership. Additionally, stakeholders have also stated their interest in working collaboratively to better provide a wide, rich, and diversified collection of professional development offerings. The NDCI collaborative partners network represents such collaborative planning.

Y. State Participates in Three National Assessment Consortia and Prepares for the Transition to a New Generation of State Assessments.

The state is currently a member-in-good-standing within three separate assessment consortia, which includes general and alternate assessment development: the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC), and the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortia (SBAC). These three multistate consortia were awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Education to develop an assessment system based on the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS). To achieve the goal that all students leave high school ready for college and career, these three consortia are committed to ensuring that assessment and instruction embody the CCSS and that all students, regardless of disability, language, or subgroup status, have the opportunity to learn this valued content and demonstrate what they know and can do. The assessment system will be field tested in the 2013-2014 school year and administered live for the first time during the 2014-2015 school year. Refer to Attachment 6, which provides the evidentiary memoranda of agreement between the state and the various assessment consortia.

With strong support from member states, institutions of higher education, and industry, these three consortia will develop a balanced set of measures and tools, each designed to serve specific purposes, including summative and interim assessments, administrative support tools, and resources to advance meaningful professional development. Together, these components will provide student data throughout the academic year that will inform instruction, guide interventions, help target professional development, and ensure an accurate measure of each student's progress toward career and college readiness. The NDDPI stipulates to the developmental alignment studies conducted by each respective assessment consortium that documents these assessments alignment to the CCSS.

The state is a participating member within the PARCC and SBAC and a governing member within the NCSC. As defined in the these respective consortium's governance documents, each state is required to take an appropriately active role in supporting the work of the consortium, this participation may include, depending on the specific consortium, membership on an executive committee and active participation in one or more product development committees. Each assessment consortium has pursued a selective set of core criteria, including the development of

summative, interim, and formative elements appropriate to the design of each consortium. The state will work to disseminate the various products related to administering these assessments and providing professional development to expand the use of the Consortia's products within the practice of daily instruction and assessment. Refer to Principle 2(A) below for an extended overview of the state's assurances regarding these forthcoming assessments.

The state has instituted recent education reforms that enhance its abilities to transition to the next generation of statewide assessments aligned to the CCSS and to support local school districts in this transition effort.

1. Recent state education reforms enacted during the North Dakota Sixty-first Legislative Assembly authorized, among other initiatives as presented in subsection O above, the administration of certain college- and career-readiness assessments for all eleventh grade students as an additional means of measuring students' readiness for college or career options, in addition to the North Dakota State Assessment which is based on the state's academic content standards.

North Dakota Century Code (15.1-21-19; <http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c21.pdf>) specifies that each public and nonpublic school student in grade eleven shall take the ACT, including the writing test, or three WorkKeys assessments recommended by the Department of Career and Technical Education and approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Each student determines which summative assessment to take. The student's school district of residence is responsible for the cost of one summative assessment and its administration per student.

This policy effectively established multiple assessments to measure and validate student readiness, to link high school preparations with college entrance expectations, and to provide clarity and incentives to students to better focus their academic preparations toward either college or career success. The provision of these assessments complements the North Dakota State Assessment's standards-based measures and provides a supplementary means of preparing schools and students to anticipate a recalibration of both standards and assessments that align to the CCSS.

2. Recent state education reforms enacted during the North Dakota Sixty-first Legislative Assembly established a requirement, as presented in subsection R above, for local school districts to administer interim achievement assessments within designated grade levels for all public schools. North Dakota Century Code (15.1-21-17; <http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c21.pdf>) specifies that each school district shall administer annually to students in grades two through ten the Measures of Academic Progress test or any other interim assessment approved by the superintendent of public instruction. Local school districts may seek to administer any interim assessment that will advance its academic assessment system and that is approved by the NDDPI. This practice of administering interim assessments will continue under state law when the CCSS are implemented.

Subsection R above presents the guidance that the NDDPI will issue within the near future to assist local school districts to increase the rigor of their selected interim assessments to better align to the CCSS prior to the 2014-15 school year, when the

next generation of summative and interim assessments will become available. This guidance in addition to the issuance of a national RFI to compile and disseminate reputable CCSS-aligned interim assessments will prepare local school districts and educators to transition the CCSS within their interim and formative assessment strategies.

The NDDPI has identified the provision of valid, reliable, and CCSS-aligned interim assessments as a critical component of the state's overall assessment strategy.

3. The NDDPI has instructed CTB/McGraw-Hill, LLC, the state's primary contractor for the North Dakota State Assessment, to incorporate certain selective test items from within CTB's existing pool of CCSS-aligned test items, for placement within the North Dakota State Assessment. Any selection and placement of these CCSS-aligned test items must meet the state's assessment protocols to ensure proper alignment and equating within the current assessment design. This limited inclusion of certain CCSS-aligned test items allows for an incremental transition of the state's assessments toward a CCSS-aligned design, in advance of the state's eventual full transition to a new assessment system in 2014-15. Any selected test items will be compatible in alignment to the state's current content standards yet provide the benefit of an improved item-specific design that reflects the emphasis and rigor of the CCSS, within the bounds of the state's established equating rules.
4. The state is an active participating member in good standing of the PARCC, SBAC, NCSC, and ASSETS assessment development consortia. This level of participation within each of the primary assessment consortia has positioned the state well to gain from the diversity of model designs and administrative approaches of each of these consortia, which has deepened the state's repository of assessment materials and knowledge. The state has benefited directly with this involvement by (a) disseminating all non-embargoed materials to the NDCI curriculum template committees, such as critical content specifications documents, for the purposes of integrating content from these consortia materials into the curriculum templates' presentation, and (2) inviting and engaging education content specialists and leaders from across the state to participate actively in the various assessment design and system's support events sponsored by the various consortia. Participants returning from these sponsored events have presented their knowledge and shared non-embargoed materials within professional development activities at various statewide and regional sessions.

Among the more important materials from these consortia that the NDDPI will make available to educators statewide will be the achievement level descriptors that each consortium is developing in anticipation of their assessments' ultimate rollout. These achievement level descriptors will provide critical information to help educators calibrate their content and achievement expectations regarding the CCSS. Understanding the explicit and implicit CCSS performance expectations, as perceived by these assessment consortia, will help form and align educators' expectations. This alignment of expectations will carry across to structure educators' formative instruction and formative assessment strategies.

The NDDPI will continue to participate actively within these consortia within existing participation rules and dependent on the state's final selection of a general assessment consortium model.

5. The NDCI has identified certain activities that it will sponsor to provide assessment supplementary materials and professional development offerings related to CCSS-based assessments. Subsection E above presents an overview of these various initiatives. The NDCI represents a statewide network of partners committed to collaborative learning. The NDDPI has committed funding support to continue this cooperative effort.

The preceding subsections to Principle 1(B) constitute substantive evidence of the state's commitment to ensure the proper transition into and implementation of the CCSS statewide. These initiatives are predicated, in large measure, on collaborative actions of a wider community of education stakeholders. These explicit initiatives are also representative of the many more widely scattered and diverse activities that have been adopted by local schools and educators to explore, understand, dissect, reassemble, integrate, deliver, and evaluate the CCSS within a school and classroom setting. It is the expectation of the NDDPI that these various levels of activities will expand and intensify over the course of the next couple years as the state proceeds to implement the CCSS.

1.C DEVELOP AND ADMINISTER ANNUAL, STATEWIDE, ALIGNED, HIGH-QUALITY ASSESSMENTS THAT MEASURE STUDENT GROWTH

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The SEA is participating in one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition.</p> <p>i. Attach the State's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under that competition. (Attachment 6)</p>	<p>Option B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The SEA is not participating in either one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition, and has not yet developed or administered statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs.</p> <p>i. Provide the SEA's plan to develop and administer annually, beginning no later than</p>	<p>Option C</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The SEA has developed and begun annually administering statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the SEA has submitted these assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review or attach a timeline of when the SEA will submit the</p>
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	the 2014–2015 school year, statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs, as well as set academic achievement standards for those assessments.	assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review. (Attachment 7)
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An Assurance of Providing High-Quality, CCSS-based State Assessments

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) states its assurance that the state will provide annual, statewide high-quality assessments in at least English language arts and mathematics for grades three through eight and at least once in high school that are aligned with the state's college- and career-ready standards and that measure student growth. The NDDPI states its assurance that the state will administer such assessments on an annual basis beginning no later than the 2014-15 academic year.

The NDDPI further states its assurance that in providing for and implementing high-quality assessments aligned with the state's college- and career-ready standards, the state will ensure that appropriate accommodations will be provided to students with disabilities and English Learners, consistent with the ESEA section 1111(3)(b). The NDDPI stipulates that its high-quality assessments will assess all students, including students with disabilities and English Learners.

The state is currently a member-in-good-standing within three separate assessment consortia, which includes general and alternate assessment development: the PARCC, the NCSC, and the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortia. These three multistate consortia were awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Education to develop an assessment system based on the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS). To achieve the goal that all students leave high school ready for college and career, these three consortia are committed to ensuring that assessment and instruction embody the CCSS and that all students, regardless of disability, language, or subgroup status, have the opportunity to learn this valued content and show what they know and can do. The assessment system will be field tested in the 2013-2014 school year and administered live for the first time during the 2014-2015 school year. Refer to Attachment 6, which provides the evidentiary memoranda of agreement between the state and the various assessment consortia.

With strong support from member states, institutions of higher education, and industry, these

three consortia will develop a balanced set of measures and tools, each designed to serve specific purposes, including summative and interim assessments, administrative support tools, and resources to advance meaningful professional development. Together, these components will provide student data throughout the academic year that will inform instruction, guide interventions, help target professional development, and ensure an accurate measure of each student's progress toward career and college readiness. The NDDPI stipulates to the developmental alignment studies conducted by each respective assessment consortium that documents these assessments alignment to the CCSS.

The state is a participating member within the PARCC and SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortia and a governing member within the NCSC Consortium. As defined in the these respective consortium's governance documents, each state is required to take an appropriately active role in supporting the work of the consortium, this participation may include, depending on the specific consortium, some of the following activities:

- Is a member of the Executive Committee
- Is a member of a designated work group(s)

Each assessment consortium has pursued a selective set of core criteria, including the development of summative, interim, and formative elements appropriate to the design of each consortium. These elements, in part, include the following:

Summative Assessments

- Mandatory comprehensive accountability measures that include either computer adaptive or fixed-form assessments and performance tasks (dependent on the assessment model ultimately selected by the state), administered in the last 12 weeks of the school year in grades 3–8 and high school for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics (dependent on final assessment designs and costs, the state may adopt additional assessments for grades 9-10);
- Designed to provide valid, reliable, and fair measures of students' progress toward and attainment of the knowledge and skills required to be college and career ready;
- Capitalize on the strengths of computer adaptive testing, i.e., efficient and precise measurement across the full range of achievement and quick turnaround of results;
- Produce composite content area scores, based on the computer-adaptive items and performance tasks.

Interim Assessments

- Optional comprehensive and content-cluster measures that include computer adaptive assessments and performance tasks, administered at locally determined intervals;
- Designed as item sets that can provide actionable information about student progress;
- Serve as the source for interpretive guides that use publicly released items and tasks;
- Grounded in cognitive development theory about how learning progresses across grades and how college- and career-readiness emerge over time;
- Involve a large teacher role in developing and scoring constructed response items and performance tasks;
- Afford teachers and administrators the flexibility to:
 - select item sets that provide deep, focused measurement of specific content clusters embedded in the CCSS;
 - administer these assessments at strategic points in the instructional year;

- use results to better understand students’ strengths and limitations in relation to the standards;
- support state-level accountability systems using end-of-course assessments.

Formative tools and processes:

- Provides resources for teachers on how to collect and use information about student success in acquisition of the CCSS;
- Will be used by teachers and students to diagnose a student’s learning needs, check for misconceptions, and/or to provide evidence of progress toward learning goals.

Accountability:

- Fully committed to providing each member state reliable, valid, and comparable achievement and growth information for each student;
- Enables each state to implement its own approved state accountability system;
- Establishes achievement standards in 2014 following the administration of the field test in the 2013-2014 school year;

System Features

- Ensures coverage of the full range of ELA and mathematics standards and breadth of achievement levels by combining a variety of item types (i.e., selected-response, constructed response, and technology-enhanced) and performance tasks, which require application of knowledge and skills;
- Provides comprehensive, research-based support, technical assistance, and professional development so that teachers can use assessment data to improve teaching and learning in line with the standards;
- Provides online, tailored reports that link to instructional and professional development resources;
- Provide clear and appropriate practices regarding accessibility to all elements of CCSS-based instruction and assessment, including valid and reliable accommodations practices that are properly suited to the unique educational needs of student with disabilities, English language learners, or other specified special needs students.

The state stipulates that it has fully met all expectations placed upon it by its participation in each of these three consortia. The state further stipulates that it will acquire a full governing membership status within the general assessment consortium in late 2012, pending certain achievement indicators and following the state’s final selection between the PARCC and SMARTER Balanced assessment consortia.

The NDDPI states its assurance that the state has developed and implemented and demonstrates the full capacity to reliably administer a student growth model that employs rigorous standards of measurement and expectation. The NDDPI will employ the state’s standards-to-growth and growth percentile student growth metric to discern the emerging growth patterns for every student and will apply this metric in determining a school’s overall student achievement rates, in terms of the state’s high-quality, standards-based assessments. The state’s established growth model incorporates aggressive growth targets that result in all students, including students with disabilities and English Learners, meeting the state’s CCSS within a three-year span and corroborated with acceptable growth percentile trends. Student background characteristics are not an acceptable consideration in the determination of student growth.

The NDDPI further states its assurance that the state will adopt ELP standards that correspond to the state's CCSS, consistent with the requirements in ESEA section 3113(b)(2), no later than the 2013-14 school year, and that reflect the academic language skills necessary to access and meet the CCSS. Additionally, the NDDPI states its assurance that the state will develop and administer high-quality ELP assessments aligned with the state's ELP standards, consistent with ESEA sections 1111(b)(3), 3113(b)(2), and 3122(a)(3). The state has entered into an agreement with WIDA to update the state's current ELP standards to align appropriately with the CCSS. The state also has entered into an agreement with WIDA to update the current ELP assessment to better align with the CCSS.

The NDDPI states its assurance that the state will provide alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, consistent with federal regulations. These alternate assessments will be aligned with the state's CCSS. The state will move to discontinue its current use of an alternate assessment based on modified achievement standards by the 2014-15 academic year, when the new CCSS-based alternate assessments will become effective.

The NDDPI stipulates that the state will proceed with its efforts to administer alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards by (1) establishing and monitoring implementation of clear and appropriate guidelines for IEP teams to apply in determining students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who will be assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards; (2) informing IEP teams that students eligible to be assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards may be from any of the disability categories listed in the IDEA; (3) providing to IEP teams a clear explanation of the difference between assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards and those based on alternate academic achievement standards, including any effects of state and local policies on the student's education resulting from taking an alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards; and (4) ensuring that parents of students selected to be assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards under the state's guidelines are informed that their child's achievement will be measured based on alternate academic achievement standards.

The NDDPI states its assurance that by no later than the 2014-15 academic year, the state will report annually to the public on college-going and college-credit accumulation rates, as defined under State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Indicators (c)(11) and (c)(12), for all students and subgroups of students in each local school district and each public high school in the state.

PRINCIPLE 2: STATE-DEVELOPED DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

2.A DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A STATE-BASED SYSTEM OF DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

- 2.A.i Provide a description of the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system that includes all the components listed in Principle 2, the SEA's plan for implementation of the differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system no later than the 2013–2014 school year, and an explanation of how the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system is designed to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

The State of North Dakota is justifiably proud of our historically high student performance. The state is also mindful of the deficiencies in student achievement that exist among certain subgroups and within certain identified schools. We also recognize the need for all the schools and districts to actively engage in ongoing school improvement practices so that we can continue to improve instructional practice and student learning. The state has a process in place to ensure that all schools are engaging in school improvement.

Education improvement is a required component for all North Dakota public schools seeking approval. The state's education improvement process (SEIP) is a five-year continuous cycle with specified reports to the Department of Public Instruction from the school or external team chair. The Department now recognizes three processes for schools or districts to use for their education improvement process which include: AdvancED, State Education Improvement Process (SEIP) and the North Dakota Moving to Improve Learning for Everyone (NDMILE).

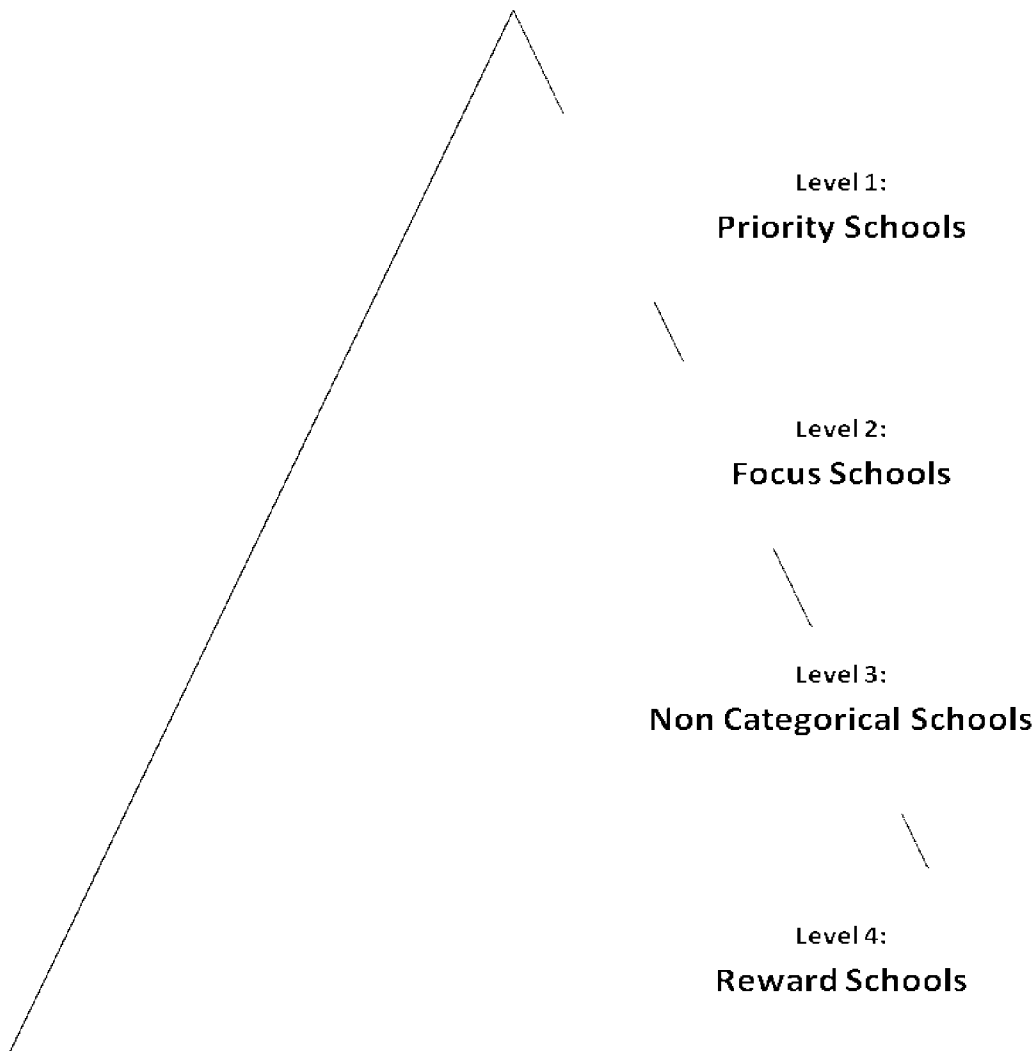
The purpose of Principal 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability and Support is primarily to identify low performing schools and provide intensive support as consistent with the intent of the Title I law. North Dakota, as a local control state, is putting forth this proposal that is primarily focused on identifying the three required categories of schools identified in ESEA flexibility (Priority, Focus, Reward) and providing support to those groups of schools.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) will prepare and publish Annual Measureable Objective (AMO) reports for each public school in the aggregate and by certain subgroup designations. Determination regarding meeting AMOs will only be made against the school's aggregate scores, however, the report will outline state assessment results by subgroup. AMO reports are generated based on (1) student achievement in reading and mathematics on the state's annual assessments, (2) student attendance rates in elementary and middle schools, and (3) student graduation rates in high schools. AMO determination will first be made based on current year's data. The state will combine up to three years student achievement data to determine AMO status if necessary to meet the minimum "n" size. AMO determinations will be made independently for each public school in the state.

CLASSIFICATION OF SCHOOLS

Under the proposed accountability model, there would be four classifications of schools that determine the need for support or recognition.

- **Priority Schools:** Lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools.
- **Focus Schools:** Additional ten percent of Title I schools that are low achieving in a particular subgroup.
- **Non Categorical Schools:** All North Dakota schools that do not fall into the category of a priority, focus, or reward school.
- **Reward Schools:** Highest-performing/highest-progress five percent Title I schools.



As required under the ESEA Flexibility waiver, we are identifying priority, focus, and reward schools. All other schools that do not fall into one of these three categories are simply classified as non categorical schools. These schools have no specific requirements that must be adhered to under the waiver.

2.A.ii Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding information, if any.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The SEA includes student achievement only on reading/language arts and mathematics assessments in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools.</p>	<p>Option B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system or to identify reward, priority, and focus schools, it must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. provide the percentage of students in the “all students” group that performed at the proficient level on the State’s most recent administration of each assessment for all grades assessed; and b. include an explanation of how the included assessments will be weighted in a manner that will result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve college- and career-ready standards.
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2.B SET AMBITIOUS BUT ACHIEVABLE ANNUAL MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

Select the method the SEA will use to set new ambitious but achievable annual measurable objectives (AMOs) in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for the State and all LEAs, schools, and subgroups that provide meaningful goals and are used to guide support and improvement efforts. If the SEA sets AMOs that differ by LEA, school, or subgroup, the AMOs for LEAs, schools, or subgroups that are further behind must require greater rates of annual progress.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Set AMOs in annual equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the</p>	<p>Option B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Set AMOs that increase in annual equal increments and result in 100 percent of</p>	<p>Option C</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use another method that is educationally sound and results in ambitious but</p>
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<p>percentage of students in the “all students” group and in each subgroup who are not proficient within six years. The SEA must use current proficiency rates based on assessments administered in the 2011–2012 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p>	<p>students achieving proficiency no later than the end of the 2019–2020 school year. The SEA must use the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2011–2012 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p>	<p>achievable AMOs for all LEAs, schools, and subgroups.</p> <p>i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.</p> <p>ii. Provide an educationally sound rationale for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs in the text box below.</p> <p>iii. Provide a link to the State’s report card or attach a copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2011–2012 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the “all students” group and all subgroups. (Attachment 8)</p>
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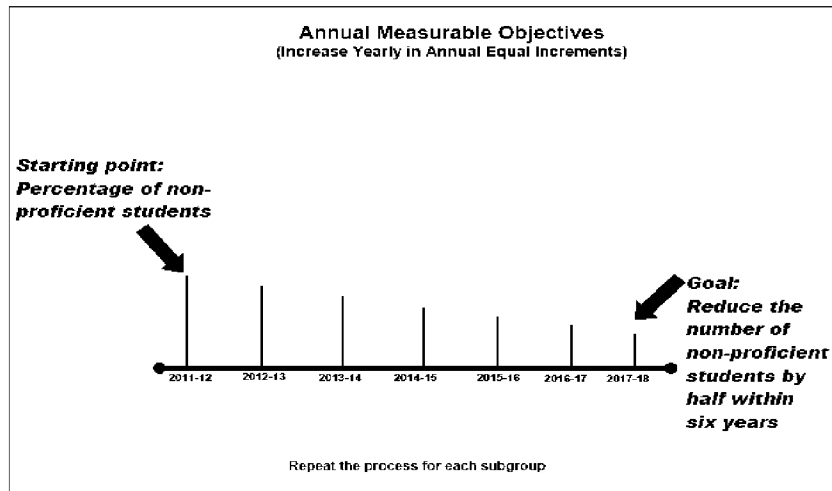
The NDDPI is electing to use another educationally sound method which results in ambitious but achievable AMOs for all schools and subgroups.

i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.

The NDDPI will set AMOs in annual equal increments toward a goal of reducing by 25% the percentage of students in the “all students” group and in each subgroup who are not proficient within six years. The SEA is using current proficiency rates based on assessments administered in the 2011-2012 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs.

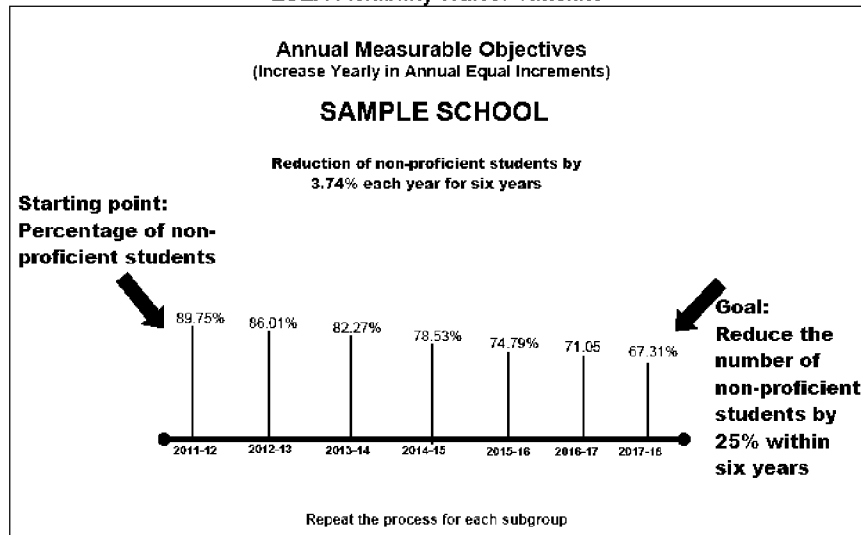
North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
 Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead, State Superintendent
 600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 201
 Bismarck, ND 58505-0440

ESEA Flexibility Waiver Timeline



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- ii. **Provide an educationally sound rationale for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs in the text box below.**

The NDDPI conducted an analysis of the state's AMOs based on Option A in which the AMOs were set in annual equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the "all students" subgroup not proficient within six years.

The ESEA Planning Committee reviewed the impact data for the state's lowest

performing schools on the Priority Schools list. This analysis indicated that a sample high school would be required to make an annualized gain of 7% consistently for six consecutive years. The ESEA Planning Committee sought a more plausible model which would establish achievable incremental steps for high poverty, low performing schools. Therefore, the state proposes to use the same conceptual model illustrated within Option A; however, the state would replace the “reduce by 50%” with “reduce by 25%” within six years.

This proposed incremental model determines AMOs in a manner that reflects the conceptual design of the ED guidance, Option A. This proposed model adjusts the rate of reduction from 50% to 25% over six years. In the estimation of the ESEA Planning Committee this proposed model is plausible and achievable.

- iii. **Provide a link to the State’s report card or attach a copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2011-2012 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the “all students” group and all subgroups.**

Refer to Attachment 8, which presents the 2011-12 academic year achievement rates for all students and all subgroups and a link to the state’s profile reports.

2.C REWARD SCHOOLS

2.C.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying highest-performing and high-progress schools as reward schools . If the SEA’s methodology is not based on the definition of reward schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department’s “Demonstrating that an SEA’s Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions” guidance.

It is the intent of the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) to honor Title I schools that have improved student achievement. The NDDPI will recognize and identify reward schools that meet criteria in one of three categories:

- Category One: Schools that have demonstrated high academic achievement (i.e., high performing schools).
Using the North Dakota State Assessment data for the past three years, the NDDPI will identify as reward schools in category one , the 2.5% Title I schools based on the composite academic achievement of “all students” grouped in reading and math.
- Category Two: Schools that have significantly closed the achievement gap between student groups (i.e., high progress schools).
Using the North Dakota State Assessment data for the past three years, the NDDPI will identify as reward schools in category two, the 2.5% highest performing Title I schools that have closed the achievement gap between student groups. The schools identified

show the most “progress” in eliminating the gap in a subgroup.

Category Three: Schools that have been identified for NASTID National Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition program (i.e., Distinguished Title I Schools). The state of North Dakota strongly supports the National Association of State Title I Directors (NASTID) National Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Program. North Dakota will annually participate in the Distinguished Schools Award Program to honor Title I schools that have, through innovative approaches as identified by each state, improved student achievement. North Dakota will select one Title I school (targeted assistance or schoolwide) to receive the National Title I Distinguished Schools award in one of the following groups.

Group One: Schools that have exceeded their adequate yearly progress goal (i.e., AMO goal) for two or more years. NCLB, Section 1117(b)(1)(B)(ii)

Group Two: Schools that have significantly closed the achievement gap between student groups. NCLB, Section 1117(b)(1)(B)(i)

Criteria

Schools interested in applying for this award must have:

- Had a poverty rate of at least 35% during the last school year,
- Made AYP or met AMOs for the past two consecutive school years, and
- Demonstrated high academic achievement for the past two consecutive school years.

Any school that is interested in this award and meets the requirements listed above must:

1. Complete the School Participation Form.
2. Complete the Title I Distinguished School Program Application.
3. Complete a one-page school description. Components to be considered include:
 - Teaching and learning based on state standards
 - Use of research-based instructional strategies
 - Providing opportunities for all children to achieve
 - Coordination with other programs
 - Professional development
 - Partnerships with parents, families, and communities

The school will be rated in each category as:

- ❖ Exemplary
- ❖ High Evidence
- ❖ Moderate Evidence
- ❖ No Evidence

Please note, only schools that receive a rating of Exemplary or High Evidence in each of the six components in #3 listed above may be

nominated for this national recognition.

Distinguished Title I schools selected across the nation will be honored at the annual National Title I Conference. The North Dakota State Title I office will sponsor two school staff members to attend and accept this award for their school. We strongly believe this program encourages innovation in schools and facilitates a sense of camaraderie among staff.

2.C.ii Provide the SEA’s list of reward schools in Table 2.

2.C.iii Describe how the SEA will publicly recognize and, if possible, reward highest-performing and high-progress schools.

North Dakota’s reward schools in category one and two will receive statewide recognition through several methods. A statewide news release will be disseminated recognizing all reward schools for their achievement. The recognition will include congratulatory letters and certificates from the State Superintendent. We will also post the list of reward schools on our North Dakota Department of Public Instruction website. In addition, the schools will be recognized at our annual fall statewide conference.

Distinguished Title I schools selected in category three will be honored at the annual National Title I Conference. The state Title I office will use funding under the Academic Achievement provision to sponsor two school staff members to attend and accept this award for their school. We strongly believe this program encourages innovation in schools and facilitates a sense of camaraderie among staff.

2.D PRIORITY SCHOOLS

2.D.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying a number of lowest-performing schools equal to at least five percent of the State’s Title I schools as priority schools. If the SEA’s methodology is not based on the definition of priority schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department’s “Demonstrating that an SEA’s Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions” guidance.

The priority schools identified are the lowest-achieving Title I schools based on the federal formula. The total number of Priority Schools in North Dakota must be at least five percent of the total Title I schools in the state. North Dakota developed its list of Priority Schools using the following procedure:

- The NDDPI ranked Title I schools from the highest to lowest, based on the composite academic achievement of “all students” grouped in reading and math from the last three years data on the North Dakota state assessment.
- A Priority School may also be a Tier I or Tier II school under the School Improvement

Grant (SIG) program that is using the SIG funds to implement a school intervention model.

- A Priority School may also be a Title I-participating or Title I-eligible high school with a graduation rate less than 60 percent over three consecutive years.

2.D.ii Provide the SEA's list of priority schools in Table 2.

2.D.iii Describe the meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles that an LEA with priority schools will implement.

Schools identified as priority schools will be expected and required to implement the turnaround principles as identified in the ESEA Flexibility Waiver. The NDDPI will be working with the Center for Innovation and Instruction (CII) to incorporate the turnaround principles into our NDMILE tool. In order to generate baseline data, ensure implementation, and monitor progress, these schools will be required to evaluate and track their progress on these turnaround principles and report regularly to the NDDPI. These turnaround principles include:

The turnaround principles as identified in the ESEA waiver are meaningful interventions designed to improve the academic achievement of students in priority schools. These interventions must be aligned with all of the following "turnaround principles" and selected with family and community input:

- Providing strong leadership by: (1) reviewing the performance of the current principal; (2) either replacing the principal if such a change is necessary to ensure strong and effective leadership, or demonstrating to the state that the current principal has a track record in improving achievement and has the ability to lead the turnaround effort; and (3) providing the principal with operational flexibility in the areas of scheduling, staff, curriculum and budget;
- Ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction by: (1) reviewing the quality of all staff and retaining only those who are determined to be effective and have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort; (2) preventing ineffective teachers from transferring to these schools; and (3) providing job-embedded, ongoing professional development informed by the teacher evaluation and support system and tied to teacher and student needs;
- Redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration;
- Strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is researched-based, rigorous, and aligned with State academic content standards;
- Using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including providing time for collaboration on the use of data;
- Establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and addressing other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs; and
- Providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.

Title I Planning/Reporting for Priority Schools through NDMILE

The NDDPI will utilize various methods to provide oversight to each LEA with a priority school to

ensure that it is implementing its guiding principles fully and effectively. The NDDPI is working in partnership with CII to build a reporting system specific to the guiding principles in the NDMILE tool.

All priority schools will be required to develop a continuous improvement plan aligned with the turnaround principles consisting of a needs assessment, goals, activities and an evaluation process. This plan will be collected and reviewed to ensure a rigorous nature.

All but two of the current priority schools utilize the NDMILE tool for school improvement. To maintain consistency for the high need schools NDDPI will require priority schools to use NDMILE to write and implement a continuous improvement plan. The NDMILE is a web-based system for school improvement planning that is made up of 99 key indicators at no cost to the schools. Each indicator is tied to researched best practices on how to effectively improve student achievement for all students, including English language learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students. These key indicators will be cross walked to align with the turnaround principles. If necessary, additional indicators may be added to ensure a comprehensive plan.

Through the plan approval process, the NDDPI will make sure the schools participating in NDMILE have selected indicators and are implementing interventions that are proven to help the student populations affected by the school's achievement gap(s). If the plan is found not to be effective during the improvement process, the school must work with the State to make changes accordingly. Each school is assigned a state technical assistance provider. In addition, the school will be provided with a list of qualified external providers and Capacity Builders that the district/school can contract for additional support. Over the past four years the NDDPI, in partnership with the CII, developed a web-based system with state-identified key indicators. NDDPI works closely with CII on training, resources, tools, and areas of need. In order to keep up with the latest research, CII is continuously updating the research provided for the indicators. CII has also provided research to specific indicators that are aligned to RTI, ELL, and Special Education.

The benefits of priority schools using the NDMILE tool to write and implement a continuous improvement plan includes the following elements:

- web based online tool
- no cost
- research based indicators of effective practice
- state level support through technical assistance providers, coaching comments, and training
- meet multiple plan requirements using one planning process (State Education Improvement Plan, Title I Schoolwide Plan, and Title I Program Improvement Plan/ Priority School Improvement Plan)
- resources, tools, and reports built into the tool
- tracks progress
- continuous ongoing improvement plan that encourages and supports collaboration among school staff
- assessable to stake holders (parents, school board, staff)
- live updates reflecting current status/ progress of improvement.

NDMILE provides school improvement teams opportunities to inform, coach, sustain, track, and report improvement activities. NDMILE assists schools in determining where they are and helps

them get to where they want to be—every child learning and every school improving. NDMILE offers multiple performance indicators of evidence-based practices at the school and classroom levels to improve student learning. The system accommodates rubrics for assessment of the indicators, assists in developing plans and tasks around the indicators, tracks dates, and lists those responsible for monitoring progress of the indicators. The NDMILE planning and coaching tool allows for flexibility to accommodate the reporting requirements for education improvement, such as accreditation, schoolwide and program improvement, through one report. NDMILE will guide improvement teams through a continuous cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, and progress tracking. The school focus will be clear, responsibilities assigned, and efforts synchronized.

Of the current priority schools listed, six schools operate jointly between the State of North Dakota and the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). In collaboration with CII, the NDDPI and BIE have ventured into a joint partnership working with these schools to utilize the NATIVESTAR/NDMILE tool. This unprecedented partnership allows the schools operating jointly under state and BIE to utilize one tool to fulfill both state and BIE requirements. This is an invaluable asset to North Dakota and BIE schools.

Included in the NDMILE process are the following planning features:

Technology links each indicator to a succinct synthesis of the related research, examples, and resources.

Coaching Comments feature allows an external coach to offer feedback to the team. The system maintains a thread of the dialogue between the coach and the team, and the comments can be saved or printed as a report.

Family Engagement Tool (FET) is a five-step process by which the school team conducts a needs assessment of parent involvement, checks Title I compliance, and develops objectives for improvement. The system provides an extensive library of downloadable materials for parent involvement.

Electronic Reporting, provided with an administrative page, allows for convenient monitoring of each district and school's progress, and allows access to electronically submitted reports. Reporting may include electronic submission of required documents to meet federal and state requirements, such as education improvement plans for accreditation, schoolwide plans, program improvement plans and district professional development plans.

Progress Tracking Report displays progress for identified performance indicators assessed and the specific action plans.

Built-in Documentation mechanisms provide practical ways for creating agendas, recording minutes, assigning tasks, setting timelines, allocating resources, entering coaching comments, and monitoring the degree of implementation.

Wise Ways® is an online tool that provides easy access to current research aligned to each indicator.

A variety of supports are provided to priority schools through the NDMILE system. Each is outlined below:

1. NDMILE Capacity Builders

A resource available to priority schools are NDMILE Capacity Builders. The NDMILE Capacity Builders assist schools in building the school's capacity so each NDMILE leadership team has the skills necessary to carry out the school improvement initiatives. The Capacity Builders are individuals the school can contract with to:

- Assist schools/districts to improve student learning through the use of the NDMILE process.

- Work with schools/districts to foster leadership capacity.
- Assist schools in the completion of blended reporting systems for compliance.
- Assist schools with data analysis to identify areas of need.
- Collaborate with the school teams through the implementation and evaluation of NDMILE.
- Provide assistance through consultation, training, professional development, and technical assistance.
- Monitor progress through on-site visits.
- Provide timely and consistent feedback on implementation for monitoring and evaluation purposes through the use of coaching comments.

2. NDMILE Technical Assistant Providers

Each NDMILE school has a DPI contact person who offers technical assistance through the NDMILE process. To ensure success for priority schools, the DPI is committed to providing technical assistance and support for schools as they work through the steps of the process.

3. Indicators in Action

Indicators in Action is a professional learning resource produced by the CII. This resource provides an explanation of indicators of effective practices. Video clips of principals, teachers and teams show what the indicators of effective practices look like in a classroom setting when they are actually “in action”. This resource uses the NDMILE indicators in the video clips; however, the “Indicators in Action” would be an appropriate professional learning opportunity for faculty and team meetings or other workshops dealing with school improvement initiatives.

4. NDMILE WebEx Training Series

A series of webinars is available for schools using the NDMILE. These sessions are designed as a review for schools on how to accomplish each of the six steps in the NDMILE. Topics include:

- Registering the school, overview of the NDMILE and timelines
- Assessing indicators and using the Wise Ways®
- Resources, reports and documenting meeting agendas and minutes
- Developing plans and tasks that move schools forward
- Coaching comments and giving effective feedback
- Monitoring and reviewing school plans

Monitoring Priority Schools Through NDMILE

Priority schools using this process allows the state, district and school to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of its school improvement efforts. Effectiveness can be monitored through the NDMILE indicators in the plan where tasks are created by the schools, progress is monitored by setting goals of tasks to be completed, and accountability is expressed by assigning responsibility to a staff member to monitor target dates, and completion dates for each task. During the monitoring of the plan, the school must provide the experience, sustainability, and evidence as to how each indicator was fully implemented.

Financial Support for Priority Schools

Priority schools will have the ability to apply for two competitive funding sources. We identify these as 1003a and 1003g funds (SIG) funds.

All priority schools will be able to apply for the state's 1003a funds. These schools will be encouraged to use the funds to contract with external providers to assist in implementing the ESEA Flexible seven guiding principles.

An LEA with one or more priority schools will also be given the opportunity to apply for 1003g funds, referred to as SIG funds. An LEA will only qualify for 1003g funding if it applies to implement one of the four SIG models in a priority school (closure, restart, turnaround or transformation). As mentioned earlier, if a priority school implements one of the four SIG Models, it is considered to be implementing an intervention that satisfies the turnaround principles.

CII- SIG Online Tool

To maintain consistency, The NDDPI will also utilize the NDMILE system to monitor and evaluate progress for priority schools accepting 1003g funds. The NDDPI has collaborated with CII to develop a process for planning and tracking the schools progress in implementing the SIG models. The success in North Dakota utilizing NDMILE and Native Star (the BIE version of the tool), made it an obvious choice to incorporate the SIG Online Tool. One of the most notable outcomes of using this system is the collaboration it naturally fosters.

The SEA. . .

- Sets reporting dates and benchmarks for periodic monitoring
- Reviews the school transformation team's
 - Meeting agendas and minutes
 - Progress with implementation indicators
 - Progress with school-specific interventions
 - Progress with leading and lagging metrics
- Enters reviewer comments on Progress Reports
- Data mines across all transformation schools in state
- Generates reports
- Captures information for project evaluation

The LEA. . .

- Designates internal partner (LEA staff) and/or external partner (Partner Organization staff) to coach school transformation teams
- Reviews the school transformation team's
 - Meeting agendas and minutes
 - Progress with implementation indicators
 - Progress with school-specific interventions
 - Progress with leading and lagging indicators
- Data mines across transformation schools in district
- Reviews Progress Reports before they are submitted
- Reviews SEA reviewer comments

The School Team. . .

- Documents and tracks progress (over the SIG grant period) toward
 - Implementation indicators
 - Leading indicators
 - Lagging indicators
- Plans transformation team meetings with agendas and minutes
- Assesses, plans, and tracks progress with implementation indicators
- Links to resources relative to each implementation indicator
- Generates a variety of reports
- Dialogues with coaches

- Electronically submits reports to SEA

As a requirement of schools receiving 1003g funding, the indicators and reports listed below will also be required. This information is available on the Native Star/NDMILE dashboards for those 1003g funded priority schools.

- Transformation Implementation Indicators (also known as SIG online tool)
- Interventions Annual Form by Federal Requirement
- Leading and Lagging metrics Annual Form

The SIG Online Tool allows for display and reporting of the Transformation Implementation Indicators within federal requirement for the transformation model categories

- Replace the Principal
- Turnaround Leadership
- Competencies
- Implement Strategies
- Implement Evaluation Systems
- Provide Incentives
- Reward or Remove Staff
- Instructional Programs
- Continuous Use of Data
- Professional Development
- Increased Learning Time
- Family and Community Engagement
- Operational Flexibility
- Technical Support

In the event a North Dakota priority school applies for SIG funds to implement a different SIG model (restart, turnaround, closure) NDDPI will work with CII to build the appropriate set of indicators. The SIG Online Tool will be able to generate key reports needed to document work completed in the tool.

- **Summary Report:** Provides a summary of transformation team activity, including number of meeting minutes and progress toward implementation indicators. This report is automatically generated and requires no new entry.
- **Comprehensive Plan Report:** Provides detailed tracking of progress with implementation indicators. This report is automatically generated and requires no new entry.
- **Leading/Indicator Metric Report:** Provides updates to progress with leading/lagging metrics.
- **Interventions Report:** Includes a brief statement of progress for each implementation strand and reviewer comments which are then provided from the SEA to the school/LEA.

The SIG Online Tool also has the capacity to provide reviewer comments back to the school/LEA on the Monitoring Report. The SEA has determined the reporting dates for each submission, and the reports are submitted electronically for review by the LEA and SEA. The SIG Online Tool captures a great deal of documentation for determining progress with implementation indicators, leading and lagging metrics, as well as state monitoring and evaluation methods, which will include additional oversight.

The NDDPI uses the SIG Online Tool for its SIG Tier I schools implementing the transformation

model. The needs assessment, planning, monitoring, and evaluation design is utilized in the SIG Online Tool through indicators of effective practice. The implementation indicators parallel the federal requirements for the Transformation Model which is the model utilized by current North Dakota SIG Tier I schools.

To assist SEAs in using this tool for formative and summative evaluation, CII has created several documents to guide verification of implementation levels. States can use this information for reporting implementation fidelity to ED and as one source of data for SIG program evaluation.

Monitoring and oversight will be a crucial issue for the NDDPI. The CII SIG Online Tool will greatly assist us in meeting the federal requirements while at the same time facilitating improvement activities.

The NDDPI will also monitor each LEA that receives a SIG through the required submission and review of reports and school level achievement data. The NDDPI will annually monitor the fiscal expenditures of each SIG application through a detailed paper report. This report is called the *Follow-up Report for Additional Program Improvement Funding* (SFN 52822). This report, in conjunction with the online NDMILE reports and achievement data, will clearly demonstrate whether or not the SIG grantees are meeting their goals and will be used to determine if continuous funding is approved.

Technical Assistance

Each priority school has been assigned a Title I contact person. This person is responsible for continued communication, technical assistance, and program oversight throughout the year for all schools under their purview. Best efforts are made to keep the assigned Title I contacts the same from year-to-year to encourage consistency and integrity. The Title I contact person will monitor the LEA and school progress, answer questions, ensure reports are submitted in a timely manner, and oversee the schools implementation of the ESEA Flexibility principles, turnaround SIG indicators and intervention model for each school.

Reporting

At the close of the school year, LEAs with a priority school will be required to complete an *Annual Program Improvement Report* (SFN 52820) in which the district/school outlines progress made toward their goals and performance indicators.

In North Dakota, we believe that the amount of oversight that each LEA will need will vary significantly across the state. Many districts, in particular larger school districts, have a stronger internal support system and greater access to resources to help them implement all requirements in their priority schools. However, smaller districts, such as those with limited resources, substantial barriers, or districts considered “at-risk”, may need significant oversight to ensure that the priority school requirements are implemented with fidelity. The processes and supports established for priority schools allow the states to consider the LEA capacity and provide assistance accordingly.

NDDPI will develop tiered levels of intervention to target our technical assistance, monitoring, and oversight to meet the needs of all participating LEAs while ensuring SIG final requirements are met.

- 2.D.iv Provide the timeline the SEA will use to ensure that its LEAs that have one or more priority schools implement meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in each priority school no later than the 2014–2015 school year and provide a justification for the SEA's choice of timeline.

Upon identification of Priority Schools, North Dakota will work to ensure that each LEA implements meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in each of these schools, based on reviews of specific academic needs of the school and its students.

State Level Support

• State submits ESEA Flexibility Waiver	September 6, 2012
• Work with the ED to get approval of ESEA Flexibility Wavier	Fall, 2012
• North Dakota students take the North Dakota state assessment	Fall, 2012
• Work with CII to incorporate ESEA Flexibility turnaround principles into NDMILE	Fall, 2012
• Apply for SIG Application 2012 Funding	Winter, 2013
• North Dakota ESEA Flexibility Waiver approved	January/February, 2013
• Work with testing company to get state assessment results	January/February, 2013
• Generate reports based on new AMOs	March, 2013
• Release AMO reports	March/April, 2013
• Notify priority schools/deadline to submit plan	March, 2013
• Conduct Regional Workshops	March, 2013
• Deadline for priority schools to apply for 1003g funding	May, 2013
• Deadline for priority schools to apply for 1003a funds	May, 2013
• Deadline for priority schools to submit plan	May, 2013
• Collect and review applications for 1003a and 1003g funding	June, 2013
• C improvement plans applications for 1003a and	June, 2013

1003g funding	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and approve 1003a and 1003g applications for priority schools 	June, 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award 1003a and 1003g funding to priority schools 	July, 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and provide technical assistance to priority schools 	ongoing

Process will be repeated each year to ensure turnaround principles and funds to help implement these principles are in place at each priority school no later than the 2014-2015 school year.

District/School Support

- Inform the district's board of education and the public on the school's progress towards achieving AMOs, student achievement and reducing gaps between subgroups.
- Conduct an annual data analysis to strengthen the school's instructional program based on student needs
- Provide adequate resources (human, physical, and fiscal) to assist in the implementation and achievement of school program goals
- Provide professional development opportunities specific to prioritized needs as identified in the comprehensive needs assessment
- Utilize NDMILE to develop either a Turnaround Principle Plan or a school transformation plan (SIG) for implementing the rapid turnaround indicators for continuous improvement.

2.D.v Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement exits priority status and a justification for the criteria selected.

A priority school may exit this designation after two years if the school has met their AMO target for two consecutive years.

This has been a justified practice in past federal regulations, therefore will be continued in the ESEA Flexibility Waiver as it outlines trends towards positive growth. It will be a strong incentive for priority schools to work hard to make gains if those gains/improvements could lead to the school being removed from the "priority schools" list.

2.E FOCUS SCHOOLS

2.E.i Describe the SEA's methodology for identifying a number of low-performing schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State's Title I schools as "focus schools." If the SEA's methodology is not based on the definition of focus schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that

the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department’s “Demonstrating that an SEA’s Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions” guidance.

The focus schools identified are an additional 10% of Title I schools that are low achieving in a particular subgroup. These are schools that have the largest gaps between the highest-achieving subgroups and the lowest-achieving subgroups, or at the high school level, have the largest within-school gaps in graduation rates. The pool of schools generated to select focus schools reflects the overall composite proficiency score for reading and math combined. We took the composite proficiency rate (profall column) and subtracted the subgroup proficiency rates (prof column). These differences are in the “diff” column. A negative “diff” means the subgroup scored higher than the overall composite group. A positive “diff” means the subgroup scored lower than the overall composite group.

2.E.ii Provide the SEA’s list of focus schools in Table 2.

2.E.iii Describe the process and timeline the SEA will use to ensure that each LEA that has one or more focus schools will identify the specific needs of the LEA’s focus schools and their students. Provide examples of and justifications for the interventions focus schools will be required to implement to improve the performance of students who are the furthest behind.

The ED guidance on ESEA Flexibility Waiver does not mandate any particular interventions for focus schools; therefore, schools identified as focus schools will have multiple options for implementing interventions and reporting their progress. These options include: implementation and reporting of the ESEA Flexibility Waiver Turnaround Principles, Supplemental Educational Services, NDMILE, or contracting with outside experts such as Title I School Support Team members or individuals approved within the North Dakota Statewide System of Support (NDSSOS) Consultant Team. Several state defined requirements will be outlined for all focus schools

- Improvement Plan
- NDDPI assigned Liaison
- Optional funding for Focus Schools
- Reporting

Improvement Plan

No later than three months after a school has been identified as a focus school, it must develop an improvement plan and submit it to the state Title I office for review and approval. For implementation purposes, the plan may cover a two-year period of time. Focus Schools will also have the option of using the NDMILE/Native Star tool as a method of submitting their improvement plan.

The school must consult with parents, school staff, the LEA, and outside experts in developing or revising its plan.

Components of an improvement plan must include...

Program Improvement History – This section provides a historical review of the school program improvement status.

Profile – This portion of the school’s plan addresses the program improvement status as well as demographic information, including:

- ❖ School size
- ❖ Specific school information
- ❖ Community information
- ❖ Population
- ❖ Staff information and student information
- ❖ Student information that is broken out by various subgroups
- ❖ General district information

Needs Assessment – A data-driven, in-depth needs assessment must be conducted in order to identify the areas in reading and math that need enhancement.

Goals – The goals identified in the plan must directly relate to the results of the needs assessments. The plan must also have established performance indicators that measure the increase in student achievement and performance levels.

Activities – The plan includes specific activities that are directly aligned to the identified goals. The plan must include activities for:

- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Professional development
- ❖ Students

Evaluation – The plan includes a process to evaluate the program improvement plan and examine the results achieved by students.

Rubric...

To ensure that all of the required components are included in the plan, schools will be given a rubric to follow. The rubric will be used by the peer reviewers to score each plan. Failure to use the rubric will affect the final score.

The process...

After the state Title I office receives the improvement plans from each of the focus schools, the plan will be reviewed by a team of outside peer reviewers. The reviewers will use the Program Improvement Scoring Rubrics to score each plan. The results of the rubric will be compiled and distributed to each program improvement school.

NDDPI Assigned Liaison

Focus schools will be assigned a NDDPI Title I Liaison who will be a resource for the school. This individual will have specific training regarding the ESEA Flexibility Waiver expectations, required reports and differentiated consequences. This individual will be in regular contact with the school to ensure the school is making forward progress toward improving school and student performance.

Optional Funding for Focus Schools

Districts with focus schools will need to utilize a variety of funding sources to support their interventions and improvement initiatives to provide cohesive opportunities that build and support the capacity. Districts will need to leverage all funds necessary to support these initiatives including, but not limited to, Title I Part A, Title II Part A, Special Education, as well as state and local resources. Districts with schools identified as a focus school may have the opportunity to apply for 1003a funding to support interventions and improvement initiatives in their focus schools. The 1003a funding will first and foremost be used to support priority schools if funds remain, focus schools may participate in a competitive application process for these funds. Due to the possibility of sequestration, little or no 1003a funding may be

available to assist priority or focus schools. If the state is able to withhold funding for 1003a and all priority schools have been assisted, only then will 1003a funds be made available for focus schools.

Reporting

All focus schools will be required to complete Annual PI reports outlining progress towards goals and optional interventions.

2.E.iv Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps exits focus status and a justification for the criteria selected.

A focus school may exit this designation after two years if the school has met their AMO target for two consecutive years.

This has been a justified practice in past federal regulations, therefore will be continued in the ESEA Flexibility Waiver as it outlines trends towards positive growth. It will be a strong incentive for priority schools to work hard to make gains if those gains/improvements could lead to the school being removed from the “priority schools” list.

2.F PROVIDE INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS FOR OTHER TITLE I SCHOOLS

- 2.F Describe how the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system will provide incentives and supports to ensure continuous improvement in other Title I schools that, based on the SEA’s new AMOs and other measures, are not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps, and an explanation of how these incentives and supports are likely to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

The state’s system provides incentives and supports that are likely to improve student achievement, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for all schools in the state. We believe these supports to be assets for all four levels of schools identified in the ESEA Flexibility Waiver (Priority, Focus, Non Categorical and Reward).

The NDDPI provides a multitude of supports to all schools, including:

- Statewide Technical Assistance

The NDDPI Title I unit has multiple ways that we provide statewide technical assistance and share effective strategies for schools identified as needing improvement. The following summarizes our key initiatives:

- Extensive Website

The state Title I office has an extensive website developed for schools identified for improvement. This site contains a variety of resources including a link to all district and school AMO reports, data comparison charts, information on reports due throughout the year, information and application forms on additional funds available for schools in improvement, sample letters and sample reports, and resources and handouts from prior workshops. Log on to <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/progress/index.shtm> to access this information.

- Assigned NDDPI Liaison

- ✓ Program Improvement Contacts

Every school identified as a priority or focus school will be assigned a Title I program staff member to answer questions, review plans and applications, and provide technical assistance. These liaisons keep in close contact with their assigned schools by gathering information, answering questions on school improvement issues, acting as a guidance coach, and tracking a school’s needs and efforts in a very comprehensive manner.

- ✓ District Contact

Every district in North Dakota is, in addition, assigned a Title I contact person. This person is responsible for continued communication, technical assistance, and program oversight throughout the year. Best efforts are made to keep the assigned Title I contact the same from year-to-year to encourage consistency and integrity. The Title I contact person will monitor the LEA and school progress, answer questions, and ensure reports are submitted in a timely manner.

- Monthly Research Report

The state Title I office generates and distributes a monthly report which summarizes

newly released research/resources on educational issues relevant to North Dakota schools. The monthly Research/Resource Report (RRR) is disseminated electronically to all principals, administrators, and Title I teachers and staff in schools identified for improvement.

○ Sharing of Effective Strategies

The NDDPI frequently contracts with exemplary educators within the state or educational entities to create resources for North Dakota schools and districts. We believe it is critical to highlight what has been proven to be effective in other schools and districts across North Dakota.

- The NDDPI requested assistance from the North Central Comprehensive Center (NCCC) in highlighting and documenting seven schools in the state of North Dakota that have made substantial improvement in their student achievement scores. Interviews with seven school administrators were conducted by the NCCC to gather information on the specific strategies each school employed to improve student achievement. A summary capturing the most important processes and initiatives was created for each school. All seven summaries were compiled into one document and shared statewide to disseminate effective practices.
- The state Title I office created a “What Works” resource guide for schools and districts to provide educators with strategies, interventions, and components used in effective educational programs. This document contains 22 one-page profiles. Each of these profiles provides an overview, research summary, and resource section on educational topics being used across the nation to improve education and raise academic achievement. The resources within this document are provided to assist schools and districts in their school improvement efforts.
- The North Dakota State Parental Information Resource Center (NDPIRC) and state Title I office contracted with state educators to create a Parent Involvement Master Literacy Bag, as well as a Parental Involvement Toolkit, for all North Dakota schools.
- The state Title I office contracted with distinguished educators to create a toolbox of exemplary school improvement practices and strategies. Each school improvement activity provides a summary of the activity, outlines the supporting research and offers a sample budget for schools and districts to reference while developing their own school improvement initiatives. These school improvement strategies are available for all schools and districts to review on the NDDPI website.

○ Department Sponsored Conferences

The NDDPI sponsors several conferences each year. Each spring, a conference for schools in improvement is held to disseminate key information regarding the school improvement requirements and to share effective strategies for making AMOs. In the fall, a statewide conference is held for educators to promote effective research-based strategies designed to raise achievement. The NDDPI also sponsors several SIG WebEx presentations specifically designed to provide technical assistance and guidance to priority and focus schools. Numerous other trainings, via conference call or Interactive Video Network, are also offered each year to share and disseminate information statewide.

○ Audio Conference/WebEx Trainings

To further expand the number of training opportunities available to Title I personnel, the state

Title I office periodically conducts conference calls on relevant Title I issues. This form of training is very beneficial because the trainings are short (one hour), easy to access, and participants don't have to be away from their building. Many of the trainings that the NDDPI will hold for priority and focus schools will be held through an audio conference.

2.G BUILD SEA, LEA, AND SCHOOL CAPACITY TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

- 2.G Describe the SEA's process for building SEA, LEA, and school capacity to improve student learning in all schools and, in particular, in low-performing schools and schools with the largest achievement gaps, including through:
- i. timely and comprehensive monitoring of, and technical assistance for, LEA implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools;
 - ii. ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools identified under the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system (including through leveraging funds the LEA was previously required to reserve under ESEA section 1116(b)(10), SIG funds, and other Federal funds, as permitted, along with State and local resources); and
 - iii. holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their priority schools.

Explain how this process is likely to succeed in improving SEA, LEA, and school capacity.

The NDDPI provides a multitude of supports for school, district, and state staff to build capacity to improve learning for all students. In many cases, these opportunities are available to all SEA, LEA and school personnel; however, there are also initiatives that are specific to those schools that are identified as low-performing or those with achievement gaps in their student subgroups.

North Dakota has an established system titled the North Dakota Statewide System of Support (NDSSOS). This system supports schools and districts as they build their capacity to implement sustained and continuous school improvement strategies with fidelity. The ultimate goal is to improve teaching and learning so ALL North Dakota students can achieve their maximum potential as 21st century learners who are prepared to live and compete in a global world. The NDSSOS provides an overview of the NDDPI's available programs and resources to support school improvement in North Dakota.

The NDSSOS will assist to build capacity in districts and schools in the areas of leadership, curriculum and instruction, assessment, school climate and culture, and professional development/learning. The NDSSOS accomplishes this by supporting schools and districts in the following areas:

1. Focus on student achievement in all support efforts.
2. Provide resources and support to district and school leaders as they are the key to facilitating change and increasing student achievement.
3. Assist in developing a shared vision and make decisions that are collaborative and

- data driven with the leadership team and all staff.
4. Provide professional learning on varied instructional strategies that accommodate all learning styles and require students to use higher-order thinking skills in all classrooms.
 5. Align the curriculum to the North Dakota Common Core Standards, mapped across grade spans to eliminate gaps and unnecessary repetitions, and be made available to all students.
 6. Provide multiple assessments which are frequent, rigorous and aligned to the North Dakota Common Core Standards and the North Dakota Common Core Assessment.
 7. Provide opportunities to ensure all assessment data are analyzed and used to inform instruction.
 8. Maximize instructional time, organizational resources, and state and federal funds for improved student achievement as facilitated by leadership team.
 9. Develop a planning process that engages representatives from all stakeholder groups, involves collecting and analyzing data, and is evaluated effectively.
 10. Assist in providing a learning environment that is safe, orderly, and focused on high achievement for all types of diverse learners.
 11. Engage families and communities as active partners in student learning and ensure all students come to school ready to learn.
 12. Provide faculty and staff with ongoing and job-embedded professional development that is aligned with a comprehensive needs assessment.
 13. Align data with identified needs, measurable goals, and allocation of funding (activities).
 14. Implement research-based best practices.

The NDSSOS uses a model of delivery built around a framework designed to build capacity of districts and schools in their effort to meet the overall goal of increased student achievement. This includes outlining departmental supports provided in the areas of leadership, curriculum and instruction, assessment, school climate and culture, and professional development/learning, and incorporates the foundations of all schools' improvement efforts. The NDDPI has created an NDSSOS manual that provides a summary of the current efforts NDDPI has in place to support districts and schools throughout the state. The NDDPI strives for inclusion and implementation of evidence and research-based best practices that support student achievement in North Dakota districts and schools.

■ Title I School Support Team/SSOS Consultant Team

A statewide School Support Team has been developed for North Dakota. Members of the School Support Team are comprised of distinguished educators regionally located throughout North Dakota. Members of the School Support Team are required to stay educated and current on the Title I programs and issues. The members are able to provide in-depth technical assistance to schools identified as priority of focus schools.

North Dakota's School Support Team works closely with the North Central Comprehensive Center to receive additional support and training in order to more effectively assist schools identified for improvement.

In addition, the state Title I office recently established a list of consultants who can assist districts and schools with planning and implementing school improvement activities. These consultants are known as the Statewide System of Support (SSOS) Consultant Team. Team members must have expertise in a variety of school improvement areas to provide individualized assistance to schools.

■ North Dakota Moving to Improve Learning for Everyone (NDMILE)

NDMILE is a web-based system that will be implemented by the NDDPI for schools to use to inform, coach, sustain, track, and report improvement activities. The NDMILE has indicators of evidence-based practices at the district and school and classroom levels to improve student learning. It is also customized so that the SEA or LEA can populate or enhance the system with its own indicators of effective practice or use those embedded in the tool. NDMILE is a tool that will guide improvement teams through a continuous cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, and progress tracking. Focus will be clear, responsibilities assigned, and efforts synchronized.

Schools participating in NDMILE will utilize the indicators that were selected for North Dakota. Schools will assess each indicator and determine the value the indicator has for improving student performance. Implementation plans will be developed and progress toward meeting goals for each indicator can be monitored through the tool.

North Dakota is one of many states that has partnered with the CII to use a tailored version of this indicator-based systems and trainings as a key component of our comprehensive system of support for schools in improvement.

■ SIG Online Tool

As indicated in Section 2.D.iii., the NDDPI will begin using the SIG Online Tool to monitor priority schools and SIG grantees.

■ ND Curriculum Initiative

The North Dakota Curriculum Initiative (NDCI) is a long-term professional development program for North Dakota public and non-public school curriculum administrators and teachers. Funded by the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction and located on the campus of North Dakota State University, Fargo, this collaborative professional development project began in the fall of 2000 and has committed educators from across the state involved in the programs. An advisory committee, represented by curriculum leaders from across North Dakota, along with the North Central Comprehensive Center (NCCC) at Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), has worked diligently in offering quality professional development to North Dakota educators.

PRINCIPLE 3: SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND LEADERSHIP

3.A DEVELOP AND ADOPT GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding description and evidence, as appropriate, for the option selected.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If the SEA has not already developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the SEA's plan to develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by the end of the 2012–2013 school year; ii. a description of the process the SEA will use to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines; and iii. an assurance that the SEA will submit to the Department a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2012–2013 school year (see Assurance 14). 	<p>Option B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If the SEA has developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. a copy of the guidelines the SEA has adopted (Attachment 10) and an explanation of how these guidelines are likely to lead to the development of evaluation and support systems that improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students; ii. evidence of the adoption of the guidelines (Attachment 11); and iii. a description of the process the SEA used to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines.
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Application Status: Option A

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) provides assurance that the state will meet and fully comply with all provisions of Principle 3 within this Application regarding the development and adoption of state guidelines for the implementation of local teacher and principal evaluations statewide. The NDDPI stipulates that the state will complete the development and adoption of all elements of the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines by the end of the 2012-13 school year, that the state will continue in its practice of involving teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines, and that the state will submit to the U.S. Department of Education (USED) a copy of all elements of the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines by the end of the 2012-13 school year. The NDDPI has marked Assurance 15 accordingly.

The NDDPI has marked Option A as the most appropriate classification for the state's current standing in meeting the provisions of Principal 3 within this Application. The state has

developed separate guidelines for teacher and principal evaluations following a ten month drafting process conducted by a statewide committee of elementary and secondary teachers and principals, district administrators, representatives of higher education, and state legislators. These developed guidelines (refer to Attachment 10) constitute the operational guidance from the NDDPI to the state's local education agencies regarding the state's adoption of core evaluation principles, application and administration practices, and related quality assurance provisions. Attachment 11 presents the official correspondence and public notice of the adoption of the state's teacher and principal evaluation guidelines by the State Superintendent, which constitutes evidence of the state's formal adoption of these guidelines.

Within both the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines, two support documents have been identified for additional development during the 2012-13 school year. These two support documents will provide additional clarification and guidance to local education agencies and constitute additions to the adopted state teacher and principal evaluation guidelines. These two support documents include

- research-based guidance to incorporate student growth and achievement data as a significant factor in the evaluation of teachers and principals, and
- rubrics to aid in the evaluation and approval of quality teacher evaluation models to
 1. support local education agencies in the selection or development of local teacher and/or principal evaluation models, and
 2. guide NDDPI in evaluating and monitoring the quality of submitted teacher and principal evaluation models.

Attachment 10, pages 7-8, within both the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines specifically identify the development of these two support documents as components of the state's teacher and principal guidelines. Since these two support documents constitute amended content to the currently adopted state teacher and principal evaluation guidelines, the NDDPI recognizes that such amendments require the state to invoke Option A, which requires an additional review process by the USED. The NDDPI provides assurance that these two amended support documents will be affixed to the approved teacher and principal evaluation guidelines and will be submitted to the USED, prior to the completion of the 2012-13 school year, for final peer review. The manner and schedule of the development process for these two support documents is specified below.

The current adopted teacher and principal evaluation guidelines provide local education agencies sufficient guidance to begin their efforts during 2012-13 and beyond to inform teachers, principals, school boards, and the public regarding the future steps required to deploy local evaluation efforts that align to the state's new guidelines. The development of the two additional support documents will occur at the time of this initial awareness and preparation. The support documents will be completed in time for local education agencies to gain the benefit of their guidance in the latter part of the 2012-13 school year for subsequent deployment activities.

A Focus on Teacher and Principal Effectiveness

The state ensures that every teacher is highly qualified through the state's teacher licensure provisions and the appropriate course assignment of teachers. State administrative rules

require teachers to be supervised by qualified principals, who are charged with clearly defined oversight responsibilities. The state and local school districts place broad supervisory and management responsibilities with principals to ensure the proper administration of their appointed schools. The state ensures that every teacher and principal is effective, in part, through the state's teacher and principal performance evaluation statutes and the continual professional development of all educators. North Dakota Century Code (15.1-15; <http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c15.pdf>) specifies that every public school district shall conduct an appropriate form and frequency of written teacher evaluations for each public school teacher, based in part on the standing tenure and experience of each teacher. During each of the first three years of employment, a school district will conduct two annual teacher performance evaluations, the first by December 15 and the second by March 15 of each respective year. Subsequently, every teacher will receive an annual performance evaluation by March 15 of each year. Teacher performance evaluations provide for the continual improvement of a teacher's instruction and overall performance and may be used to inform personnel decisions.

Similarly, North Dakota Century Code (15.1-15; <http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c15.pdf>) specifies that every public school district shall conduct an appropriate form and frequency of written evaluations for each public school principal. Principal performance evaluations provide for the continual improvement of a principal's overall performance and may be used to inform personnel decisions.

It has been the historical practice among North Dakota public schools to adopt and administer locally defined teacher performance evaluation efforts. This locally determined practice has produced a wide variety of teacher performance evaluations, which represent various reference standards, recording metrics, and narrative formats. The variety of evaluation models has not allowed for a common means of uniformly recording or compiling teacher evaluation results in terms of common professional standards or teacher evaluation performance levels. This has restricted internal district quality assurance and external compliance monitoring efforts.

It is the purpose of the state's adopted teacher and principal evaluation guidelines to provide for a more uniform means of conducting meaningful evaluations based on reputable professional standards, consistent administrative practices, and reliable recording measures. Instituting common protocols for teacher and principal evaluations meaningfully supports the state's interests in advancing teacher and principal effectiveness.

Teacher and Principal Evaluation Guidelines Development and Adoption Process

It has been the standing practice of the NDDPI to advance meaningful educational policies and practices based on broad, statewide dialogue among the state's various educational stakeholders and policymakers. Within this advisory function, the NDDPI has actively sought the meaningful engagement of the state's various stakeholders to study, among other school improvement issues, the need for the state to adopt more uniform standards and guidelines to aid local school districts in the conduct of teacher performance evaluations. To advance a collaborative response to this and other education improvement issues, the NDDPI established the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee, which consisted of approximately twenty-five separate stakeholder organizations. Attachment 10 (Appendix C within both the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines) provides the membership for the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee. The Committee met from September 2011 to August 2012 to develop the state's overall ESEA flexibility request, including all aspects of

the development of the state's teacher and principal evaluation guidelines.

During its deliberations, the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee formed a separate Subcommittee, titled the Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support System Subcommittee (TPESS Subcommittee), to develop and propose for state adoption more uniform teacher and principal performance evaluation guidelines. The TPESS Subcommittee's membership consisted of six teachers, six administrators, and four at-large members, including two legislators, a representative from the ND LEAD Center for Educational Leadership, and a higher education representative. The TPESS Subcommittee studied national- and state-focused research, reviewed emerging teacher evaluation models from other states, and sought direct technical assistance from the North Central Comprehensive Center at Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. The NDDPI facilitated and provided direct assistance to the effort. Attachment 10 (Appendix B within both the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines) provides the membership for the TPESS Subcommittee.

The TPESS Subcommittee conducted its study and drafting work from October 2011 through July 2012. The *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* (refer to Attachment 10) constitute the product of that effort. The NDDPI posted all TPESS proceedings, agendas, referenced documentation, and drafts on the official TPESS page of the NDDPI website for public review (refer to the following website: <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/ESEA/waivers.shtm>).

Following the completion of its work, the TPESS Subcommittee forwarded these teacher performance evaluation guidelines to the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee, for final review, amendment, and recommendation of these guidelines for adoption to the State Superintendent. On August 15, 2012, the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee recommended the final adoption of the *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* by the State Superintendent. The NDDPI published a general public press release and a separate notification to schools, local education agencies, and general educators that announced the release of these guidelines and invited general public comment on any and all elements of the guidelines. Attachment 2 presents the official press release and the notification memorandum to statewide educators, inviting general public comment on the proposed teacher and principal evaluation guidelines.

Following the receipt of public comments on September 1, 2012, the NDDPI assembled all public comment submissions, incorporated appropriate amendments to the guidelines based on the received public comments, and compiled a final recommendation to the State Superintendent. On September 4, 2012, the State Superintendent officially adopted the *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* as the state's official guidance. Attachment 11 presents the State Superintendent's authorizing approval and supporting policy statements regarding the state's teacher and principal evaluation systems, within the *Preface: A Policy Statement* section of these two documents.

The Approved North Dakota Teacher and Principal Evaluation Guidelines

Attachment 10 presents the state's adopted *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines*. These respective guidelines present a common structure to reinforce the state's interests in demonstrating a uniform manner of implementing meaningful evaluations that emphasize a deep, professional standard-based

focus on the practice of education and educational leadership.

Both the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines place a preface policy statement by the State Superintendent that underscores the state's commitment to and conviction in advancing effective teaching and leadership, in part, through the state's standards-based evaluation system. The guidelines constitute the state's policy provisions.

Both the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines provide an introduction section that overviews the content of the documents' sections, including

- The defining features of a meaningful teacher or principal performance evaluation system;
- The foundational teacher or principal professional standards that provide the core criteria for a teacher or principal performance evaluation system;
- The means of adopting or developing valid local teacher or principal evaluation models that are aligned to the state's teacher or principal professional standards;
- The differentiated levels that define teacher or principal professional performance;
- Reliable means of recording and compiling differentiated teacher or principal performance;
- General administrative practices to efficiently conduct a district-level evaluation system; and
- Longer-term evaluation and research efforts to measure the performance of a district's or the state's evaluation system.

Section I within both the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines present the defining purposes and features of a meaningful teacher or principal performance evaluation system. It is the expressed intent of the NDDPI that the guidelines provide local school districts with sufficient guidance to develop, adopt, and implement teacher or principal evaluation systems that:

- Will be used for continual improvement of instruction and leadership;
- Meaningfully differentiate performance using at least four performance levels;
- Use multiple valid measures in determining teacher or principal performance levels, including as a significant factor student growth data for all students. Consideration should be given to tested and non-tested subjects and grades. Additional consideration should be given to measures of professional practice, which may be gathered through multiple formats and sources, such as observations based on rigorous teacher or principal performance standards, professional portfolios, and student and parent surveys;
- Evaluate teachers or principals on a regular basis, as provided in state law;
- Provide clear, timely, and useful feedback, including feedback that identifies needs and guides professional development; and
- Will be used to inform personnel decisions.

Section I provides a timeline, spanning 2011-2017, that outlines important development and implementation event timelines.

It is the expressed purpose of the respective evaluation guidelines to ensure that local school districts can provide high-quality, uniform, valid, and reliable measures that will result in appropriate teacher or principal professional improvement plans. Any quality evaluation

system will advance continual improvements of high-quality instruction and educational leadership that will lead to improved student outcomes and advance the professional competencies of every teacher and principal.

Section II presents the uniform teacher or principal professional standards upon which all evaluation efforts are to be based. The *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* adopt and apply the *Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Model Core Teaching Standards* as the recognized standards for teacher evaluations. The *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* adopt and apply the *Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for School Leaders* as the recognized standards for principal evaluations. The validity of both the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines and practices is evidenced by the nature of their direct alignment or linkage to the respective professional standards. This alignment ensures that all teachers and principals, including teachers and principals who oversee the education of special populations of students such as students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and English language learners, will be evaluated on uniform, professionally sound principles of a student achievement-centered educational system.

Section III provides the structure for developing or adopting a valid and reliable evaluation system for teachers or principals. Included within any approvable evaluation model is the appropriate demonstration of the following:

- Validated alignment of a teacher or principal evaluation model to the specified professional standards;
- Application of at least four differentiated performance levels to record the summative rating of each teacher and principal;
- Incorporation of multiple evaluation measures in the determination of each teacher or principal's performance, including significant consideration of student growth and achievement measures; and
- Application submission by each local school district of a detailed teacher or principal evaluation model that meets the specifications within the state's teacher or principal evaluation guidelines.

Section IV outlines the requirements for the frequency of teacher or principal evaluations and the need to provide sufficient training for all stakeholders affected by the evaluation effort. The NDDPI commits to providing a longer term schedule of training regarding all aspects of the evaluation system.

Section V presents a means of recording and compiling teacher or principal evaluation results for the purposes of district internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring. These recording and compiling provisions ensure a means of conducting evaluations against at least four differentiated performance levels.

Section VI overviews the state's efforts to ensure the appropriate uniform implementation of local teacher or principal evaluation systems through a statewide monitoring effort.

Section VII expresses the state's commitment to continue the study of national, state, and local teacher and principal evaluation efforts and to apply the findings of this study into future enhancement of the state's teacher or principal evaluation guidelines.

Plans to Complete Support Documentation for the State's Teacher and Principal Evaluation Guidelines

Attachment 10 presents the state's adopted *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines*. These approved guidelines represent the state's official guidance to local school districts regarding the adoption and implementation of local teacher and principal evaluations statewide. As presented within each of these evaluation guidelines, the state has established clear protocols regarding the administration of evaluation practices based on stated standards and procedures.

Within both the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines, two support documents have been identified for additional development during the 2012-13 school year. These two support documents will provide additional clarification and guidance to local education agencies and constitute additions to the adopted state teacher and principal evaluation guidelines. These two support documents include

- research-based guidance to incorporate student growth and achievement data as a significant factor in the evaluation of teachers and principals, and
- rubrics to aid in the evaluation and approval of quality teacher evaluation models to
 1. support local education agencies in the selection or development of local teacher and/or principal evaluation models, and
 2. guide NDDPI in evaluating and monitoring the quality of submitted teacher and principal evaluation models.

The currently adopted *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* stand as official state guidance to assist local school districts, effective with the 2012-13 school year. These documents provide the information local school districts require to implement local teacher and principal evaluation programs. These state evaluation guidelines have been designed to allow for a gradual deployment timeframe, including the drafting of certain critical support documents that will further enhance the state's and local school districts' implementation of certain activities.

The state's teacher and principal evaluation guidelines, as currently adopted, provide compelling evidence that the state has proceeded in a diligent manner to design a balanced, credible, standards-based evaluation system. The state is mindful of the need to design a new, emerging model of evaluation, which consists of a variety of political and technical elements, which allows for a gradual yet steady pace of development. The guidelines identify 2012-13 as the time period when two final support components to the guidelines are developed through a statewide deliberative process. The following presents the anticipated action steps required to complete the development process of these two support documents.

Objective 1

Develop research-based guidance to incorporate student growth and achievement data as a significant factor in the evaluation of teachers and principals.

Section III (C) of the *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North*

Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines states local school district teacher or principal evaluation models must incorporate multiple valid measures, which are clearly related to increasing student academic achievement and school performance, and which are implemented in a consistent and high-quality manner. These multiple measures include some or all of

- (1) student growth and achievement measures, as a significant consideration, that incorporate performance reports from established standardized assessments within subjects and grades where such assessments are conducted, and incorporate appropriate other non-standardized assessments in other non-tested subjects and grades; and
- (2) supervisory observation based on different measures.

A district teacher evaluation model must include minimally a combination of supervisory observations and student growth or achievement data, which will constitute evidence of teachers' effectiveness in impacting actual student growth.

During the drafting of the state's teacher and principal evaluation guidelines, the state's TPESS Subcommittee recognized that additional time was required to thoroughly and responsively assess the impact of divergent research regarding the incorporation of student growth and achievement data into the state's evaluation guidelines. The TPESS Subcommittee recommended and the NDDPI agreed to conduct a systematic research-based analysis of this issue during the 2012-13 school year, with the intent to draft final guidance to be amended within the state's adopted teacher and principal evaluation guidelines by April 2013. This required activity was acknowledged within the guidelines as a means of providing open, transparent communications with the state's professional educators and the public.

During 2012-13, the NDDPI will develop guidance to further amend Section III (C) within the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines regarding the manner in which local school districts might incorporate student growth and achievement data as a significant factor in the evaluation of teachers. This research-based guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. This guidance will assist local school districts in incorporating multiple, valid student growth and achievement measures, including the North Dakota State Assessments and other valid standardized achievement measures, or other locally-developed student achievement measures for untested subjects and grades. This guidance will present various methods that provide for an appropriately balanced array of student growth and achievement measures to support each teacher's evaluation. Effective 2013-14, local school districts will incorporate those appropriate methods that meet the valid and reliable measures set forth within the guidance.

To accomplish Objective 1, the NDDPI asserts that the following activities will be conducted under the supervision of the NDDPI, according to following conditions.

The NDDPI will assume full responsibility for the development, documentation, dissemination, and eventual implementation of all activities subsumed within this

objective. Greg Gallagher, Director of Standards and Achievement (ggallagher@nd.gov; 701-328-1838), will direct all activities and assume responsibility for communications with USED and statewide stakeholders regarding the disposition of Objective 1.

The NDDPI will reconstitute the TPESS Subcommittee membership, with appropriate augmentation to incorporate additional specialists to meet the technical elements of Objective 1, to complete the required tasks. Refer to Attachment 10 and Appendix B of the *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* for the membership of the TPESS Subcommittee and its representative, organizational structure. The NDDPI will consult with and seek technical assistance from REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. The TPESS Subcommittee will consult with and ultimately report to the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee regarding any findings and recommendations regarding Objective 1. The TPESS Subcommittee will draft final guidance regarding Objective 1 and incorporate this guidance as amendments to the state's current teacher and principal evaluation guidelines. The State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee will consider the TPESS Subcommittee's amended guidelines and act to advance a recommendation to the State Superintendent. The State Superintendent will open any amended guidelines for public comment prior to a final determination. Upon any eventual approval and adoption of amended guidelines, the NDDPI will forward these amended guidelines to the USED for review.

The TPESS Subcommittee will consult with its technical advisors to develop amended guidelines that reflect reputable research. Refer to Attachment 10 and Appendix A of the *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* for a representative sample of the research the TPESS Subcommittee has referenced in its initial phase of deliberations. This list of research will be expanded to address the issues specific to Objective 1.

The NDDPI will reconstitute the TPESS Subcommittee by September 15, 2012. The NDDPI anticipates that the Subcommittee's work will run from September 2012 through March 2013, which will include a period of public comment. The NDDPI anticipates providing final amended teacher and principal evaluation guidelines to local school districts by April 2013. All other activities previously stated within Section I of the *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* remain unaltered and fully operational.

The NDDPI reserves the right to amend the scope of any Objective 1 proceedings and the scheduled release of anticipated findings, as dictated by the course of the TPESS Subcommittee's proceedings. The NDDPI will report any variance in agenda or time schedule to the USED from those specified within Principle 3 of this Application.

The NDDPI will apply federal ESEA Title VI funding to support the development costs related to conducting Objective 1 activities. The NDDPI projects that the cost of conducting the development work related to Objective 1 will approximate \$25,000, based on previous development activities of similar design.

The NDDPI asserts that the State Superintendent and the NDDPI are provided sufficient authority under State Administrative Code, Article 67-22

(<http://www.legis.nd.gov/information/acdata/pdf/67-22-01.pdf>) to develop and implement a statewide teacher or principal evaluation system, as required within this Application. The NDDPI does not anticipate any legal obstacles that may prevent the State from developing and implementing these amended guidelines within the specified time frame; however, in the event of a legal challenge, there may exist certain time constraints or variances that cannot be fully accounted for by the NDDPI. The NDDPI will fully inform the USED via official correspondence and the public via the NDDPI website and appropriate media outlets of any impediments to the anticipated time schedule for this effort.

Objective 2

Develop rubrics to aid in the evaluation and approval of quality teacher evaluation models to

- 1. support local education agencies in the selection or development of local teacher and/or principal evaluation models, and*
- 2. guide NDDPI in evaluating and monitoring the quality of submitted teacher and principal evaluation models.*

Section III (D) of the *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* presents the manner in which local school districts might submit applications for local teacher and principal evaluation models.

During the drafting of the state's teacher and principal evaluation guidelines, the state's TPESS Subcommittee recognized that additional time was required to thoroughly and responsively develop a rubric that would guide the NDDPI and adjunct advisory and review committees to review in a consistent manner the quality and sufficiency of any local school district's teacher or principal evaluation models. The TPESS Subcommittee recommended and the NDDPI agreed to conduct a systematic research-based analysis of this issue during the 2012-13 school year, with the intent to draft final guidance to be amended within the state's adopted teacher and principal evaluation guidelines by April 2013. This required activity was acknowledged within the guidelines as a means of providing open, transparent communications with the state's professional educators and the public.

During 2012-13 NDDPI will develop rubrics to aid in the evaluation of quality teacher evaluation models. These rubrics will

- (a) support local school districts in the selection or development of local teacher evaluation models and
- (b) guide the NDDPI in evaluating and monitoring the quality of submitted local school district evaluation models.

These rubrics and supporting guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. Effective 2013-14, local school districts will use this evaluation rubrics to guide them in their application process. Similarly, the NDDPI and

its adjunct advisory and review committees will use these rubrics to rate the quality and sufficiency of any local school district's evaluation models.

During the Spring of 2013 the NDDPI will begin the ongoing compilation of national and local teacher evaluation models that have been reviewed and approved by the NDDPI based on the state's quality evaluation rubrics. The process of reviewing and approving quality teacher evaluation models will be conducted by NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide adjunct advisory or review committee of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

During 2012-13 the NDDPI will develop an online application to process the submission of local school district teacher evaluation models. All submitted models will undergo a formal review process based on established quality evaluation rubrics against the *Guidelines*.

To accomplish Objective 2, the NDDPI asserts that the following activities will be conducted under the supervision of the NDDPI, according to following conditions.

The NDDPI will assume full responsibility for the development, documentation, dissemination, and eventual implementation of all activities subsumed within this objective. Greg Gallagher, Director of Standards and Achievement (ggallagher@nd.gov; 701-328-1838), will direct all activities and assume responsibility for communications with USED and statewide stakeholders regarding the disposition of Objective 2.

The NDDPI will reconstitute the TPESS Subcommittee membership, with appropriate augmentation to incorporate additional specialists to meet the technical elements of Objective 1, to complete the required tasks. Refer to Attachment 10 and Appendix B of the *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* for the membership of the TPESS Subcommittee and its representative, organizational structure. The NDDPI will consult with and seek technical assistance from REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. The TPESS Subcommittee will consult with and ultimately report to the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee regarding any findings and recommendations regarding Objective 2. The TPESS Subcommittee will draft final guidance regarding Objective 2 and incorporate this guidance as amendments to the state's current teacher and principal evaluation guidelines. The State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee will consider the TPESS Subcommittee's amended guidelines and act to advance a recommendation to the State Superintendent. The State Superintendent will open any amended guidelines for public comment prior to a final determination. Upon any eventual approval and adoption of amended guidelines, the NDDPI will forward these amended guidelines to the USED for review.

The TPESS Subcommittee will consult with its technical advisors to develop amended guidelines that reflect reputable research. Refer to Attachment 10 and Appendix A of the *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* for a representative sample of the research the TPESS Subcommittee has referenced in its initial phase of deliberations. This list of research

will be expanded to address the issues specific to Objective 2.

The NDDPI will reconstitute the TPESS Subcommittee by September 15, 2012. The NDDPI anticipates that the Subcommittee's work will run from September 2012 through March 2013, which will include a period of public comment. The NDDPI anticipates providing final amended Section III (D) guidelines regarding these evaluation rubrics to local school districts by April 2013. All other activities previously stated within Section I of the *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* remain unaltered and fully operational.

The NDDPI reserves the right to amend the scope of any Objective 2 proceedings and the scheduled release of anticipated findings, as dictated by the course of the TPESS Subcommittee's proceedings. The NDDPI will report any variance in agenda or time schedule to the USED from those specified within Principle 3 of this Application.

The NDDPI will apply federal ESEA Title VI funding to support the development costs related to conducting Objective 2 activities. The NDDPI projects that the cost of conducting the development work related to Objective 2 will approximate \$25,000, based on previous development activities of similar design.

The NDDPI asserts that the State Superintendent and the NDDPI are provided sufficient authority under State Administrative Code, Article 67-22 (<http://www.legis.nd.gov/information/acdata/pdf/67-22-01.pdf>) to develop and implement a statewide teacher or principal evaluation system, as required within this Application. The NDDPI does not anticipate any legal obstacles that may prevent the State from developing and implementing these amended guidelines within the specified time frame; however, in the event of a legal challenge, there may exist certain time constraints or variances that cannot be fully accounted for by the NDDPI. The NDDPI will fully inform the USED via official correspondence and the public via the NDDPI website and appropriate media outlets of any impediments to the anticipated time schedule for this effort.

3.B ENSURE LEAS IMPLEMENT TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

- 3.B Provide the SEA's process for ensuring that each LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements, with the involvement of teachers and principals, including mechanisms to review, revise, and improve, high-quality teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with the SEA's adopted guidelines.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) provides assurance that the state's *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* and the forthcoming amendments to these guidelines will ensure that each local education agency will develop, adopt, pilot, and implement, with the involvement of teachers and principals, evaluation and support systems that will lead to high-quality local

teacher and principal and evaluation and support systems.

The NDDPI stipulates that the state will complete the development and adoption of all elements of the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines by the end of the 2012-13 school year, that the state will continue in its practice of involving teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines, and that the state will submit to the U.S. Department of Education (USED) a copy of all elements of the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines by the end of the 2012-13 school year. The NDDPI has marked Assurance 15 accordingly. The resulting final amended *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* will provide a complete accounting of the process that local school districts will use to fully implement local teacher and principal evaluation models that are consistent with the state's guidelines.

A Statewide System Established on Standards and Guidelines

Attachment 10 presents the state's adopted *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines*. These approved guidelines represent the state's official guidance to local school districts regarding the adoption and implementation of local teacher and principal evaluations statewide. As presented within each of these evaluation guidelines, the state has established clear protocols regarding the administration of evaluation practices based on stated standards and procedures.

A. A Standards-based Teacher and Principal Evaluation System

The foundational validity and grounding uniformity of the state's teacher and principal evaluation system, is its alignment to reputable, national professional standards. Section II of the guidelines presents the uniform teacher or principal professional standards upon which all evaluation efforts are to be based. The *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* adopt and apply the *Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Model Core Teaching Standards* as the recognized standards for teacher evaluations. The *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* adopt and apply the *Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for School Leaders* as the recognized standards for principal evaluations. The validity of both the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines and practices is evidenced by the nature of their direct alignment or linkage to the respective professional standards. This alignment ensures that all teachers and principals, including teachers and principals who oversee the education of special populations of students such as students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and English learners, will be evaluated on uniform, professionally sound principles of a student achievement-centered educational system.

B. Requirement for Local Model's Alignment to State Standards

The *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* (Section III (A)) require that local school districts must adopt local teacher and principal evaluation models that align to the state's adopted professional standards. Each local school district model will provide evidence of this alignment and assurance that all teacher and principal evaluation ratings will be conducted according to these standards.

C. Uniform Performance Level Differentiation

The *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* (Section III (B)) specify at least four differentiated performance levels to record the summative rating of each teacher. To ensure uniformity and fidelity in implementation, local school districts will conduct teacher and principal evaluations consistent with this provision.

D. Uniform Multiple Valid Measures

The *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* (Section III (C)) provide for the uniform incorporation of multiple valid measures into teacher and principal evaluation models, which are clearly related to increasing student academic achievement and school performance, and which are implemented in a consistent and high quality manner. These multiple valid measures include student growth and achievement measures that incorporate performance reports from established state standardized achievement assessments within subjects and grades where such assessments are conducted, and incorporate appropriate other non-standardized assessments in other non-tested subjects and grades. These multiple valid measures will also include supervisory observations based on a variety of optional indicators. Any local district teacher or principal evaluation model will include a combination of supervisory observations and student growth or achievement data, which will constitute evidence of a teacher's or principal's effectiveness in impacting actual student growth.

During 2012-13, the NDDPI will develop guidance to further amend Section III (C) within the teacher and principal evaluation guidelines regarding the manner in which local school districts might incorporate student growth and achievement data as a significant factor in the evaluation of teachers. This research-based guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. This guidance will assist local school districts in incorporating multiple, valid student growth and achievement measures, including the North Dakota State Assessments and other valid standardized achievement measures, or other locally-developed student achievement measures for untested subjects and grades. This guidance will present various methods that provide for an appropriately balanced array of student growth and achievement measures to support each teacher's evaluation. Effective 2013-14, local school districts will incorporate those appropriate methods that meet the valid and reliable measures set forth within the guidance.

E. Uniform Local School District Application Process

The *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* (Section III (D)) provide for a uniform statewide application process that clearly presents the specifications of a valid and reliable local teacher or principal evaluation model. In 2012-13 the NDDPI will develop and post an online application process and form that allows local school districts to submit their adopted or locally-designed teacher or principal evaluation model. This online application

process provides a simplified means of providing program assurances and narrative that outline a district's administrative procedures. The provision for such a uniform statewide application process ensures that local school districts will proceed with comparable clarity and efforts in implementing meaningful local teacher and principal evaluation models. The online application form includes the following elements:

1. Local school district name;
2. Local school district identification number;
3. Name and position of the designated district representative responsible for the submission of the district's evaluation system plan and who will act as primary district contact person;
4. Executive summary of the local school district teacher or principal evaluation model, which provides
 - a. the title of the teacher or principal evaluation model;
 - b. a statement of the model's authorship, including its commercial vendor or locally designed origin;
 - c. vendor identification, if the model is purchased from a commercial vendor source;
 - d. a general description of the evaluation model's design and salient components;
 - e. a general description of the evaluation model's administrative practices; and
 - f. any additional elements that support the evaluation model's overall validity and reliability.
5. Narrative assurance that the local school district
 - a. will evaluate the performance of every teacher against the state's InTASC professional standards or of every principal against the state's ISLLC professional standards;
 - b. provides sufficient evidence that its evaluation model is fully aligned to the InTASC or ISLLC standards; and
 - c. declares whether it will evaluate its teachers against either the four general InTASC categories or the ten specific InTASC standards, or its principals against the ISLLC standards;
6. (Optional) Narrative description of any additional, voluntary professional standards that a local school district may evaluate teachers or principals against, provided that the district minimally evaluates against the state's InTASC or ISLLC professional standards;

7. Narrative assurance that the local school district will evaluate teacher or principal performance in terms of the state's four differentiated performance levels, or, if the district adopts a non-standard model with a different performance level metric, the district must (1) define the relative performance or behavior evidenced at each differentiated level, and (2) demonstrate that it can collapse and compile aggregately its teacher or principal performance levels into the state's adopted standard four levels for internal quality assurance and external compliance monitoring purposes.
8. Narrative description of the manner in which the local school district will rate, record, and compile teacher or principal performance against multiple measures, as specified within Section III(C) of the guidelines, which consist minimally of supervisory observation and a significant level of student growth and achievement, including a description of the manner in which tested and non-tested subjects and grades contribute significantly to teachers' or principals' overall performance evaluation determinations as described as follows:
 - a. Required Measure: Student growth and achievement measures that incorporate performance reports from established standardized assessments within subjects and grades where such assessments are conducted, and incorporate appropriate other non-standardized assessments in other non-tested subjects and grades:
 - (1) Evaluations for teachers or principals of tested subjects and grades *must include* the North Dakota State Assessment, and may also include any other valid student standardized student achievement measures, at a district's discretion, including
 - (a) Measure of Academic Progress;
 - (b) ACT or SAT;
 - (c) WorkKeys;
 - (d) Advanced Placement exams;
 - (e) Benchmark assessments;
 - (f) Classroom- or curriculum-based assessments;
 - (g) Pre- and post-tests; and/or
 - (h) Other district-determined standardized measures.
 - (2) Evaluations for teachers of untested subjects and grades must include evaluations of student growth and achievement as chosen by individual districts, including locally-developed student

achievement measures.

During 2012-13, the NDDPI will develop guidance regarding the manner in which local school districts might incorporate student growth and achievement data as a significant factor in the evaluation of teachers or principals. This research-based guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. This guidance will assist local school districts in incorporating multiple, valid student growth and achievement measures, including the North Dakota State Assessments and other valid standardized achievement measures, or other locally-developed student achievement measures for untested subjects and grades. This guidance will present various methods that provide for an appropriately balanced array of student growth and achievement measures to support each teacher's evaluation. Effective 2013-14, local school districts will voluntarily incorporate those methods that meet the valid and reliable measures set forth within the guidance.

- b. Required Measure: Supervisory observation which may include any or all of the following optional measures:
- (1) Student learning objectives;
 - (2) Classroom observation by a designated school leader, including but not limited to the principal, another school administrator, a mentor teacher, and/or a peer;
 - (3) Teacher portfolios or other artifacts of teacher practice;
 - (4) Student, parent, teacher, or community perception surveys;
 - (5) Self-assessment instruments;
 - (6) Teacher goal-setting;
 - (7) Analysis of student, class, school, and district student achievement data;
 - (8) Videos;
 - (9) Focused collaborative discussions;
 - (10) Peer feedback or assessment; and/or
 - (11) Other indicators.

A district teacher or principal evaluation model shall include minimally a combination of supervisory observations and student growth or

achievement data, which will constitute evidence of teachers' or principals' effectiveness in impacting actual student growth.

9. (Optional) Narrative description of any additional voluntary, valid measures against which the local school district will rate, record and compile teacher or principal performance, and any voluntary, weighted rating percentage for such measures;
10. Narrative description of the general scoring metric to be used to rate, record, and compile teacher or principal performance across specified standards or general categories;
11. Narrative assurance that the local school district will collect and compile aggregated school and district teacher or principal performance rates for internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring;
12. Narrative assurance that, where it is appropriate, teacher or principal evaluation will result in the development of a continuous professional growth plan, which is aligned to the results of a teacher's or principal's overall standards-based ratings. Any continuous professional growth plan should specify future professional development or performance remediation steps, as may be required;
13. Narrative description of the local school district's plans to train all staff on the purpose, standards, procedures, and accountability reporting of the district's evaluation system;
14. Narrative description of the process used to ensure that the school district will develop, adopt, pilot, and implement its teacher or principal evaluation and support system with the active involvement of teachers and principals.

This statewide application process provides a framework to incorporate the state's adopted quality assurance protocols into all local school district teacher and principal evaluation models. To complete the state's capacity to uniformly conduct and administer the evaluation of each local school district's proposed teacher and principal evaluation model, rubrics must be developed that provide clarity and fidelity to the state's guidelines.

During 2012-13 NDDPI will develop rubrics to aid in the evaluation of quality teacher and principal evaluation models. These rubrics will

- (a) support local school districts in the selection or development of local teacher and principal evaluation models and
- (b) guide the NDDPI in evaluating and monitoring the quality of submitted local school district evaluation models.

These rubrics and supporting guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. Effective 2013-14, local school districts will use this

evaluation rubrics to guide them in their application process. Similarly, the NDDPI and its adjunct advisory and review committees will use these rubrics to rate the quality and sufficiency of any local school district's evaluation models.

During the spring of 2013 the NDDPI will begin the ongoing compilation of national and local teacher and principal evaluation models that have been reviewed and approved by the NDDPI based on the state's quality evaluation rubrics. The process of reviewing and approving quality teacher and principal evaluation models will be conducted by NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide adjunct advisory or review committee of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

During 2012-13 the NDDPI will develop an online application to process the submission of local school district teacher or principal evaluation models. All submitted models will undergo a formal review process based on established quality evaluation rubrics against the guidelines.

A Statewide System Which Defines Evaluation Frequency

The *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* (Section IV) presents state law which establishes the frequency of evaluations for teachers and principals. Local school districts may adopt a timeframe for the scaling up of their teacher evaluation system as specified in Section I of the guidelines. Local school districts may adopt any administrative practices to implement the development, adoption, piloting, scaling up, and deployment of their evaluation system, consistent with state law. North Dakota Century Code (15.1-15; <http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c15.pdf>) specifies that every public school district shall conduct an appropriate form and frequency of written evaluations for each public school teacher or principal, based in part on the standing tenure and experience of each teacher or the established schedule for principals. During each of the first three years of employment, a school district will conduct two annual teacher performance evaluations, the first by December 15 and the second by March 15 of each respective year. Subsequently, every teacher or principal will receive an annual performance evaluation by March 15 of each year. Teacher or principal performance evaluations provide for the continual improvement of a teacher's instruction and principal's leadership and overall performance and may be used to inform personnel decisions.

Local school districts shall ensure that school district personnel who are responsible for the supervision and evaluation of teachers or principals are sufficiently informed and trained to administer the district's evaluation system, consistent with the guidelines provisions.

The NDDPI will provide training and technical assistance regarding the possible design, development, implementation, recording, compiling, tracking of quality assurances, and compliance monitoring procedures of local teacher or principal evaluation system models to local school district personnel who are responsible for the supervision and evaluation of teachers or principals. The NDDPI will provide a schedule of ongoing teacher or principal evaluation training, including training provided by other associations, which will be communicated to local school district superintendents, principals, and other local school officials.

A Statewide System Which Defines Uniform Recording and Compiling of Evaluation Ratings

The *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* (Section V) present the state's four levels of differentiated performance for teachers and principals. A high-quality, uniform, valid, and reliable teacher or principal evaluation system allows a supervisor to apply a common measure across various criteria and to record these measures in a succinct, accessible manner for all teachers, regardless of grade level or subject matter. Teacher evaluation measures must appropriately capture and classify a teacher's performance in a meaningful and timely manner such that a teacher can identify his or her strengths and areas where additional attention might be required. A uniform teacher evaluation system reliably records and compiles teacher evaluation ratings for internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring within local schools and local school districts.

Local school districts shall evaluate and record teacher or principal performance against (1) the appropriate number of InTASC or ISLLC standards and (2) the four standard performance levels. Teacher or principal evaluation ratings shall consist of a performance level score for each of the appropriate number of standards and a summative score. Districts may voluntarily adopt averaged summative scores or weighted summative scores. Districts may adopt various models of recording teacher or principal performance ratings, as long as ratings can be uniformly recorded and compiled for every school and school district based on the state's recording requirements, for internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring purposes.

A Statewide System Which Ensures Compliance and Quality Assurance Through Monitoring

The *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* (Section V) present the state's monitoring efforts to ensure that each local school district complies with the administration of a valid and reliable evaluation model. It is the statutory responsibility of the NDDPI to supervise the provision of elementary and secondary education to all students within North Dakota. It is also the responsibility of the State of North Dakota, as specified within state and federal statutes, including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, to ensure that all students are provided high-quality instruction based on challenging state content and achievement standards and that this instruction is to be provided by highly qualified and effective teachers and principals. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the State to monitor, in a valid and reliable manner, student achievement outcomes and the status of the state's corps of highly qualified teachers.

The State ensures that every teacher is effective, in part, through the state's teacher and principal performance evaluation statutes and the continual professional development of all teachers. North Dakota Century Code (15.1-15; <http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t15-1c15.pdf>) specifies that every public school district shall conduct an appropriate form and frequency of written teacher or principal evaluations for each public school teacher or principal, respectively.

Every local school district stipulates within its teacher and principal evaluation application process that it will develop, adopt, pilot, and implement its teacher and principal evaluation system based on a high-quality, uniform, valid, and reliable evaluation model, consistent with the provisions of the guidelines.

The NDDPI will monitor local school district teacher and principal evaluation efforts consistent with North Dakota Administrative Code 67-22-01-01 and the terms of the guidelines. The

NDDPI will provide technical assistance to local school districts to assist districts in applying the contents of the guidelines and preparing for the administration of the district's teacher evaluation system.

The NDDPI will conduct periodic monitoring to validate the fidelity of design and implementation of each local school district's teacher or principal evaluation and support system against the provisions of the *Guidelines* and to provide technical assistance to each local school district regarding the overall improvement of its teacher or principal evaluation and support system.

It is the desire of the NDDPI that the development and dissemination of the guidelines will allow local school districts statewide to begin the process of revising their current teacher or principal evaluation procedures to meet its specifications. The *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* (Section I) present a multi-year timeline for the state's and local school districts' development and implementation activities. This timeline provides local school districts with sufficient time to study the guidelines, to establish a transitional strategy and timeline for the revision of their local teacher and principal evaluation systems, to pilot and eventually implement the provisions of their system, to train principals and other supervisors to conduct evaluations proficiently, and to communicate to stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and the public.

A Statewide System of Evaluation and Improvement Efforts

The *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* and the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* (Section VII) provides for the state's ongoing evaluation and improvement of the its teacher and principal evaluation guidelines. The NDDPI will work closely with local school districts, institutions of higher education, regional education associations, the North Dakota School Boards Association (NDSBA), the North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders (NDCEL), the North Dakota Leadership and Educational Administration Development Center (ND LEAD), the North Dakota Education Association (NDEA), REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, and other local, regional, state, and national specialists to conduct ongoing surveys of national, state, and local teacher or principal evaluation systems and practices. As additional evidence-based research and practices become available, the NDDPI will amend the guidelines to incorporate the most current best-practices.

ESEA Flexibility Request Application Attachments

- **Attachment 1: Notice to local school districts**
<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/ESEA/Attachment1.pdf>.
- **Attachment 2: Public comments**
(b)(6)
- **Attachment 3: Public notifications**
<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/ESEA/Attachment3.pdf>.
- **Attachment 4: State standards adoption notification**
<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/ESEA/Attachment4.pdf>.
- **Attachment 5: State-level understanding of standards**
(b)(6)
- **Attachment 6: Race to the Top understandings**
<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/ESEA/Attachment6.pdf>.
- **Attachment 7: State assessment peer reviews (N/A)**
- **Attachment 8: State student proficiency rates**
<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/ESEA/Attachment8.pdf>.
- **Attachment 9: Reward, Priority, and Focus schools**
<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/ESEA/Attachment9.pdf>.
- **Attachment 10: State Teacher and Principal Evaluation Guidelines**
(b)(6)
- **Attachment 11: State adoption of evaluation guidelines**
<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/ESEA/Attachment11.pdf>.

Attachment 1

Notice to LEAs

The following elements constitute the contents of Attachment 1:

- A. Public Press Release, February 17, 2012: North Dakota Proceeds with September 2012 Waiver Application Timeline;
- B. North Dakota Department of Public Instruction website: ESEA Flexibility Waivers: <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/ESEA/waivers.shtm>.

Press Release

For Release: Friday, February 17, 2012

Date: Friday, February 17, 2012
Contact: Robert Marthaller, Assistant Superintendent
Phone: (701) 328-2267

North Dakota Proceeds with September 2012 Waiver Application Timeline

Bismarck, ND – The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction today announces that North Dakota will proceed with current efforts to develop an application to waive certain provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act and to submit this application to the U.S. Department of Education by September 6, 2012, pending the review of a state waiver planning committee and the approval of the State Superintendent. The state's formal waiver application had been originally scheduled to be submitted by February 28, 2012.

In announcing his decision to extend the development of the state's waiver application, Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead, State Superintendent, observed that the state's waiver planning committee, which consisted of 23 different statewide education stakeholder organizations, had made substantial progress in reaching a general agreement on the waiver application's various provisions.

Dr. Sanstead stated, "I am heartened by the progress that our state planning committee has made to produce a meaningful, challenging application framework. It is a document that is worthy of advancement and eventual implementation. We still have work to do and we should not rush this work for the sake of some interim deadline. To stop our efforts now would prematurely stunt our state's emerging reform efforts.

"Our application framework proposes genuine improvements to our state's educational system while honoring the state's unique strengths and values, including innovations brought forward by local educators and communities."

On September 23, 2011, the U.S. Department of Education released official guidance that offered each State the opportunity to request flexibility, on behalf of itself, its local educational agencies, and its schools, from certain federal requirements in order to improve student learning, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and raise the quality of instruction.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction convened a state waiver planning committee to consider the merits of preparing a waiver. In meetings that spanned four months, the state waiver planning committee reached agreement on foundational principles that eventually formed a waiver application framework.

Dr. Sanstead, who participated in all state waiver planning committee meetings, reviewed the committee's recommendations in light of the waiver application's overall merits and deficiencies, the state's responses to the waiver application requirements, and the prospects of the state meeting the scheduled application deadline of February 28, 2012, if the state were to apply.

Dr. Sanstead identified four substantive benefits gained by seeking a waiver.

First, the waiver replaces the current annual adequate yearly progress (AYP) and program improvement identification process by focusing attention on only the lowest 5% achieving Title I schools, in addition to another 10% of those schools with gaps between overall performance and the performance of specific subgroup populations. Such a change corrects a long-standing concern over the identification practices of the No Child Left Behind Act and better focuses ever-limited resources to those schools most in need.

Second, because many schools will no longer be identified for program improvement under the waiver's new attention on priority and focus schools, the waiver restores to previously identified schools and districts up to 30% of Title I funding. Restoring these set-aside funds is a tangible benefit to schools and districts.

Third, the waiver provides states with an incentive to develop unique and meaningful teacher and principal evaluation models. The state waiver planning committee has agreed to broad evaluation principles that would improve current evaluation practices yet retain local control over the evaluation process and do so in an efficient manner. Additionally, the state waiver planning committee has formed a subcommittee of statewide practitioners to develop guidelines to assist districts in the design and administration of teacher and principal evaluations.

Fourth, the State reasserts its proper role in redefining its own education accountability system that better reflects the state's unique culture, strengths, and challenges. A failure to take

advantage of this opportunity at this time would be inconsistent with our long-standing declarations for more local autonomy.

Additionally, Dr. Sanstead weighed the importance of maintaining the full engagement and support of all key stakeholders in the determination of the state's response to any application.

Dr. Sanstead concluded that the work of the state waiver planning committee should continue toward the completion of a state waiver application, pending the review of a state waiver planning committee and the approval of the State Superintendent.

Dr. Sanstead stated, "I respect the views of those who have not supported any state application, but I believe that the state has more to gain by seeking a waiver from currently onerous provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act and reasserting the state's rightful role in the development of its own educational accountability system."

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction will proceed in preparing a waiver application by the next scheduled submission timeline of September 6, 2012. The Department of Public Instruction then will reconvene the state waiver planning committee at a future date to review and provide comments on the state's draft application. The Department of Public Instruction posts all draft application documents on the Department's website and will seek public comment regarding any elements of the state's application. Following the receipt of public comment and the review of the state waiver planning committee, the State Superintendent will make a final determination regarding the submission of any state waiver application to the U.S. Department of Education, by September 6, 2012.

For more information, contact Robert Marthaller, Assistant Superintendent, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 600 East Boulevard, Dept. 201, Bismarck, ND 58505-0440, (701) 328-2267, rvmarthaller@nd.gov, or contact Greg Gallagher, Standards and Achievement Director, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 600 East Boulevard, Dept. 201, Bismarck, ND 58505-0440, (701) 328-1838, ggallagher@nd.gov.

Attachment 2

Comments on request received from local education agencies.

The following elements constitute the contents of Attachment 2:

- A. Membership of the North Dakota State Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Reauthorization Planning Committee;
- B. Membership of the North Dakota Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support System Subcommittee;
- C. Compiled public comments regarding the North Dakota ESEA Flexibility Request Application, the North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines, and the North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines.

Attachment 2 A:

**State Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)
Reauthorization Planning Committee**

Office of the Governor

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Chair, House Education Committee
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North Dakota Education Association

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North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board

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National Comprehensive Center For Teacher Quality

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Attachment 2 B

State Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems Subcommittee

Administrators

Name	District	Position	Contact Information
(b)(6)	Grand Forks	MS Principal	(b)(6)
	TGU	K-12 Principal	
	Grand Forks	Supt.	
	Killdeer	HS Principal	
	Dickinson	Supt.	
	West Fargo	Elem. Principal	

Teachers

Name	District	Position	Contact Information
(b)(6)	Grand Forks	MS Teacher	(b)(6)
	Fargo	Elem. Teacher	
	Minot	Elem. Teacher	
	Ashley	HS Teacher	
	Fargo	HS Teacher	
	Northwood	HS Teacher	

At Large

Name	Position	Contact Information
(b)(6)	Legislator	(b)(6)
	Legislator	
	NDLEAD	
	Higher Ed	

Attachment 2 C

Compiled Public Comments

Public Comments: ESEA Flexibility Request Application

Public Comments: Teacher Evaluation Guidelines

Public Comments: Principal Evaluation Guidelines

Attachment 3

Notice and information provided to the public regarding the request

The following elements constitute the contents of Attachment 3:

- A. Public Press Release, August 15, 2012: Invitation to submit public comments regarding the state's proposed waiver of certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act;
- B. Memorandum to Local School Districts, August 15, 2012: Invitation to submit public comments regarding the state's proposed waiver of certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act;
- C. Public Press Release, August 15, 2012: Invitation to submit public comments regarding proposed statewide guidelines for the professional evaluation of teachers and principals;
- D. Memorandum to Local School Districts, August 15, 2012: Invitation to submit public comments regarding proposed statewide guidelines for the professional evaluation of teachers and principals.

Press Release

For Release: Wednesday, August 15, 2012

Date: Wednesday, August 15, 2012
Contact: Greg Gallagher, Standards and Achievement Director
Phone: (701) 328-1838

Invitation to submit public comments regarding the state's proposed waiver of certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Bismarck, ND. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) invites all interested parties, including professional educators and the public at-large, to submit public comments regarding the state's application to the U.S. Department of Education to waive certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

The NDDPI has established an online website [ESEA Flexibility Waiver Application](#) that posts the state's *ESEA Flexibility Request Application*. This website also provides a reporting form to submit any public comments.

All respondents are requested to submit their comments now through September 1, 2012, at which time these comments will be included into the documentation of the state's final draft for the *ESEA Flexibility Request Application*. These public comments will assist the state superintendent regarding any future amendments to and the final disposition of the state's application.

From October 2011 to July 2012, a statewide advisory committee, appointed by the state superintendent and consisting of teachers, administrators, legislators, higher education representatives, and statewide education stakeholders, prepared a state response to the *ESEA Flexibility Request*. This response included a comprehensive list of provisions related to the adoption of college- and career-ready standards and assessments; the differentiated recognition, accountability, and support; and the

development and implementation of local teacher and principal evaluations based on state guidelines.

On September 23, 2011, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) released official guidance and application instructions regarding certain flexibility waiver options regarding the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which reauthorized the ESEA in 2001. The Department is offering each State educational agency (SEA) the opportunity to request flexibility on behalf of itself, its local educational agencies (LEAs), and its schools, in order to better focus on improving student learning and increasing the quality of instruction. This voluntary opportunity provides educators and State and local leaders with flexibility regarding specific requirements of the NCLB in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive State-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction. This flexibility is intended to build on and support the significant State and local reform efforts already underway in critical areas such as transitioning to college- and career-ready standards and assessments; developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support; and evaluating and supporting teacher and principal effectiveness.

The Department has invited interested SEAs to request this flexibility pursuant to the authority in section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), which allows the Secretary to waive, with certain exceptions, any statutory or regulatory requirement of the ESEA for an SEA that receives funds under a program authorized by the ESEA and requests a waiver. Under this flexibility, the Department would grant waivers through the 2013-14 school year, after which time an SEA may request an extension of this flexibility.

The Department will use a review process that will include both external peer reviewers and staff reviewers to evaluate SEA requests for this flexibility. This review process will help ensure that each request for this flexibility approved by the Department is consistent with the established application guidance, which is designed to support State efforts to improve student academic achievement and increase the quality of instruction, and is both educationally and technically sound. Reviewers will evaluate whether and how each request for this flexibility will support a comprehensive and coherent set of improvements in the areas of standards and assessments, accountability, and teacher and principal effectiveness that will lead to improved student outcomes. Each SEA will have an opportunity, if necessary, to clarify its plans for peer

and staff reviewers and to answer any questions reviewers may have. The peer reviewers will then provide comments to the Department. Taking those comments into consideration, the Secretary will make a decision regarding each SEA's request for this flexibility. If an SEA's request for this flexibility is not granted, reviewers and the Department will provide feedback to the SEA about the components of the SEA's request that need additional development in order for the request to be approved.

In response to this ESEA flexibility waiver opportunity, Dr. Wayne Sanstead, State Superintendent, convened a committee of statewide education stakeholders to discuss the merits of the Department's flexibility guidance and to provide recommendations regarding the desirability of pursuing a state application and, if so, to prepare an application that meaningfully addresses the Department's guidance and respects the state's overall educational priorities and values.

The final ESEA Flexibility Request Application was recommended for public release, following a meeting of the state ESEA Planning Committee on August 15, 2012.

For more information, contact Greg Gallagher at 701-328-1838 or ggallagher@nd.gov.

TO: Superintendents, principals, assistant principals, school district board members, certified teachers, non-certified district employees

FROM: Greg Gallagher, Director, Standards and Achievement

SUBJECT: Invitation to submit public comments regarding the state's proposed waiver of certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

DATE: August 15, 2012

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) invites all interested parties, including professional educators and the public at-large, to submit public comments regarding the state's application to the U.S. Department of Education to waive certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

The NDDPI has established an online website [ESEA Flexibility Waiver Application](#) that posts the state's *ESEA Flexibility Request Application*. This website also provides a reporting form to submit any public comments. A separate request for public comment has been released widely to statewide press outlets.

All respondents are requested to submit their comments now through September 1, 2012, at which time these comments will be included into the documentation of the state's final draft for the *ESEA Flexibility Request Application*. These public comments will assist the state superintendent regarding any future amendments to and the final disposition of the state's application.

From October 2011 to July 2012, a statewide advisory committee, appointed by the state superintendent and consisting of teachers, administrators, legislators, higher education representatives, and statewide education stakeholders, prepared a state response to the *ESEA Flexibility Request*. This response included a comprehensive list of provisions related to the adoption of college- and career-ready standards and assessments; the differentiated recognition, accountability, and support; and the development and implementation of local teacher and principal evaluations based on state guidelines.

On September 23, 2011, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) released official guidance and application instructions regarding certain flexibility waiver options regarding the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which reauthorized the ESEA in 2001. The Department is offering each State educational agency (SEA) the opportunity to request flexibility on behalf of itself, its local educational agencies (LEAs), and its schools, in order to better focus on improving student learning and increasing the quality of instruction. This voluntary opportunity provides educators and State and local leaders with flexibility regarding specific requirements of the NCLB in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive State-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction. This flexibility is intended to build on and support the significant State and local reform efforts already underway in critical areas such as transitioning

to college- and career-ready standards and assessments; developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support; and evaluating and supporting teacher and principal effectiveness.

The Department has invited interested SEAs to request this flexibility pursuant to the authority in section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), which allows the Secretary to waive, with certain exceptions, any statutory or regulatory requirement of the ESEA for an SEA that receives funds under a program authorized by the ESEA and requests a waiver. Under this flexibility, the Department would grant waivers through the 2013-14 school year, after which time an SEA may request an extension of this flexibility.

The Department will use a review process that will include both external peer reviewers and staff reviewers to evaluate SEA requests for this flexibility. This review process will help ensure that each request for this flexibility approved by the Department is consistent with the established application guidance, which is designed to support State efforts to improve student academic achievement and increase the quality of instruction, and is both educationally and technically sound. Reviewers will evaluate whether and how each request for this flexibility will support a comprehensive and coherent set of improvements in the areas of standards and assessments, accountability, and teacher and principal effectiveness that will lead to improved student outcomes. Each SEA will have an opportunity, if necessary, to clarify its plans for peer and staff reviewers and to answer any questions reviewers may have. The peer reviewers will then provide comments to the Department. Taking those comments into consideration, the Secretary will make a decision regarding each SEA's request for this flexibility. If an SEA's request for this flexibility is not granted, reviewers and the Department will provide feedback to the SEA about the components of the SEA's request that need additional development in order for the request to be approved.

In response to this ESEA flexibility waiver opportunity, Dr. Wayne Sanstead, State Superintendent, convened a committee of statewide education stakeholders to discuss the merits of the Department's flexibility guidance and to provide recommendations regarding the desirability of pursuing a state application and, if so, to prepare an application that meaningfully addresses the Department's guidance and respects the state's overall educational priorities and values.

The final ESEA Flexibility Request Application was recommended for public release, following a meeting of the state ESEA Planning Committee on August 15, 2012.

Press Release

For Release: Wednesday, August 15, 2012

Date: Wednesday, August 15, 2012
Contact: Greg Gallagher, Standards and Achievement Director
Phone: (701) 328-1838

Invitation to submit public comments regarding proposed statewide guidelines for the professional evaluation of teachers and principals

Bismarck, ND. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) invites all interested parties, including professional educators and the public at-large, to submit public comments regarding proposed statewide guidelines that facilitate the professional evaluation of teachers and principals.

The NDDPI has established an online website [ND Evaluation Guidelines](#) that posts separate teacher and principal evaluation guideline documents. This website also provides reporting forms to submit any public comments.

All respondents are requested to submit their comments now through October 31, 2012. Comments received by September 1, 2012 will be included into the documentation of the state's application for a flexibility waiver of certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. All public comments will assist the state superintendent regarding any future amendments to and the final disposition of these evaluation guidelines.

From October 2011 to July 2012, a statewide advisory committee, appointed by the state superintendent and consisting of teachers, administrators, legislators, and higher education representatives, drafted proposed guidelines on teacher and principal evaluations based on established and emerging statewide and national efforts. These guidelines adopt respective teacher and principal evaluation standards and provide for a more uniform framework for the professional evaluation of teachers and principals statewide.

For more information, contact Greg Gallagher at 701-328-1838 or ggallagher@nd.gov.

TO: Superintendents, principals, assistant principals, school district board members, certified teachers, non-certified district employees

FROM: Greg Gallagher, Director, Standards and Achievement

SUBJECT: Invitation to submit public comments regarding proposed statewide guidelines for the professional evaluation of teachers and principals

DATE: August 15, 2012

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) invites all interested parties, including professional educators and the public at-large, to submit public comments regarding proposed statewide guidelines that facilitate the professional evaluation of teachers and principals.

The NDDPI has established an online website [ND Evaluation Guidelines](#) that posts separate teacher and principal evaluation guideline documents. This website also provides reporting forms to submit any public comments. A separate request for public comment has been released widely to statewide press outlets.

All respondents are requested to submit their comments now through October 31, 2012. Comments received by September 1, 2012 will be included into the documentation of the state's application for a flexibility waiver of certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. All public comments will assist the state superintendent regarding any future amendments to and the final disposition of these evaluation guidelines.

From October 2011 to July 2012, a statewide advisory committee, appointed by the state superintendent and consisting of teachers, administrators, legislators, and higher education representatives, drafted proposed guidelines on teacher and principal evaluations based on established and emerging statewide and national efforts. These guidelines adopt respective teacher and principal evaluation standards and provide for a more uniform framework for the professional evaluation of teachers and principals statewide.

For more information, contact Greg Gallagher at 701-328-1838 or ggallagher@nd.gov.

Attachment 4

Evidence that the State has formally adopted college- and career-ready content standards consistent with the State's standards adoption process

The following elements constitute the contents of Attachment 4:

- A. Public Press Release, June 20, 2011: State Superintendent Approves New State Content Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, Based on the National Common Core State Standards.
- B. Memorandum to Local School Districts, April 18, 2011: Update on Forthcoming Adoption of New State Content Standards Based on the National Common Core State Standards.
- C. Foreword, State Superintendent Policy Statement Regarding the Adoption of the Common Core State Standards; North Dakota English Language Arts & Literacy Content Standards, June 2011,
http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/content/ELA/ELA_JUN0811.pdf.
- D. Foreword, State Superintendent Policy Statement Regarding the Adoption of the Common Core State Standards; North Dakota English Mathematics Content Standards, July 2011,
<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/content/math/2011/math.pdf>.

Press Release

For Release: Monday, June 20, 2011, amended

Date: Monday, June 20, 2011
Contact: Greg Gallagher, Standards and Achievement Director
Phone: (701) 328-1838
Fax: (701) 328-4770

State Superintendent Approves New State Content Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, Based on the National Common Core State Standards

Bismarck, ND – The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction announced today that Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead, State Superintendent, has approved new state content standards in English language arts and mathematics, which are based on the national Common Core State Standards. These new content standards will become effective July 1, 2013, after which all local school districts and the state's assessment system must be fully aligned to these standards.

The state's new English language arts content standards can be accessed at the following website: http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/content_standards_ela.shtm. The state's new mathematics content standards can be accessed at the following website: http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/content_standards_math.shtm. This approval of both content standards documents completes a development and review process that spans approximately two years.

In June 2010, following a one year development period, the National Governors' Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers released the national Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts and mathematics, which were developed through a national collaborative effort (http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/common_core.shtm). Following this release, the Department of Public Instruction issued a gap analysis study, conducted by Midcontinent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), which assessed the variances that exist between the CCSS and the state's 2005 academic content standards in

both English language arts and mathematics
(<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/comparison.shtml>).

From June 2010 to April 2011, statewide committees of approximately seventy content and instructional experts, nominated by their supervisors and peers and selected by the Department of Public Instruction, reviewed the CCSS, the state's current academic content standards, and the gap analysis study to develop the next generation of state academic content standards in English language arts and mathematics. The Department of Public Instruction requested that these committees prepare the next generation of state content standards and to recommend whether the state should proceed to adopt all or elements of the CCSS.

Following a ten-month, state-level review process, the content standards development committees prepared draft copies, received comments statewide from educators, completed their work, and voted unanimously that the state adopt the CCSS as the next generation of state content standards. The committees prepared final draft standards that include the CCSS, additional definitions, explanations, and commentary that may be useful in making these standards optimally useable for North Dakota educators. Finally, these committees determined that there existed a substantial need for the state to provide supplementary assistance to local school districts to develop or update their local curricula to meet the increased rigor of the state's new content standards based on the CCSS.

Following an independent review and final editing of all documents by the Department of Public Instruction, Dr. Sanstead approved and adopted the new content standards, as is provided within state law. The State Superintendent established an effective implementation date of July 1, 2013 for these new content standards to allow local school districts sufficient time to prepare for and deploy necessary curricular changes and to provide for a properly aligned state assessment system.

Dr. Sanstead outlined within the Foreword for both documents the importance of rigorous content standards in preparing students for the future. "North Dakota schools embody a long-standing tradition to build on success and to improve. These standards establish our measures for success. These standards anchor us and guide us. If we are to continue to improve as an educational system, then it is these standards that will help lead us to our goal. The North Dakota content standards are that important to us all," Sanstead stated.

"These newly revised and approved state content standards usher in a new era in the development of our state's academic content standards. These content standards reflect the extensive influence of a nationwide discussion on student expectations and the definition of college and career readiness."

The state's 2005 content standards will remain in effect until July 1, 2013, after which the newly adopted 2011 content standards will become effective for the purposes of the state's accountability system. After July 1, 2013, all public school districts are expected to provide instruction based on these new content standards. Beginning with the 2014-15 academic year, the state will begin the administration of a new generation of state assessments based on these 2011 content standards. The state is participating in two multi-state consortia to develop the next generation of state assessments, based on the national Common Core State Standards.

Beginning this summer and running throughout the 2011-12 academic year, committees of statewide educators will draft a curriculum template to aid local school districts in aligning their curricula in English language arts and mathematics to the state's new 2011 content standards. This collaborative effort will offer an efficient manner of building effective curriculum supports for teachers statewide, prior to the roll out of these new standards for the 2013-14 academic year.

Commenting on the future curriculum development work, Dr. Sanstead stated, "The work now rests with us as a community, and I am fully confident that we can meet this challenge. The best lies ahead."

-0- For more information, contact Greg Gallagher, Standards and Achievement Director, Department of Public Instruction, 600 East Boulevard, 9th Floor, Bismarck, ND 58505-0440, (701) 328-1838, ggallagher@nd.gov.

TO: District Superintendents, School Principals, and Curriculum Directors

FROM: Greg Gallagher, Director, Standards and Achievement
Department of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Update on Forthcoming Adoption of New State Content Standards Based on the
National Common Core State Standards

DATE: April 18, 2011

I write to update you on recent developments regarding the drafting of the state's next generation of academic content standards in English language arts and mathematics, which are based on the national Common Core State Standards. I also wish to inform you of a forthcoming voluntary statewide initiative to aid school districts in updating their district curricula to meet the demands of this forthcoming next generation of state standards.

I. Next Generation of State Standards

In June 2010 the National Governors' Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers released the national Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts and mathematics, which were developed through a national collaborative effort (http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/common_core.shtm). Contemporaneous with this release, the Department of Public Instruction issued a gap analysis study, conducted by Midcontinent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), which assessed the variances that exist between the CCSS and the state's current academic content standards (<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/standard/comparison.shtm>).

From June 2010 to April 2011, statewide committees of content and instructional experts, nominated by their supervisors and peers, reviewed the CCSS, the state's current academic content standards, and the gap analysis study to develop the next generation of state academic content standards in English language arts and mathematics. The Department of Public Instruction requested that these committees prepare the next generation of state content standards and to recommend whether the state should proceed to adopt all or elements of the CCSS within this next standards generation.

On April 5-6, 2011, **the content standards development committees completed their work and voted unanimously that the state adopt the CCSS as the next generation of state content standards.** The committees prepared final draft standards that include the CCSS, including additional definitions, explanations, and commentary that may be useful in making these standards optimally friendly for North Dakota educators. The committees also prepared additional optional standards that local school districts might voluntarily include within their local curricula. Finally, these committees concurred that there existed a substantial need for the state to provide supplementary assistance to local school districts to develop or update their local curricula to meet the increased rigor of the state's new content standards based on the CCSS.

Based on these recommendations, the Department has instructed McREL to prepare the final version of the documents for final review by the State Superintendent. The Department expects that these final versions will be posted in May 2011. **The State Superintendent will review these final versions and is prepared to approve their adoption in May 2011, with an anticipated implementation date of July 1, 2013,** to provide districts sufficient time to

transition into their new curricula and for the state to seamlessly transition into a new assessment system based on these new standards in the 2014-15 school year.

II. Transition Timelines

The Department anticipates a three-year transition into the state's next generation of content standards based on the national CCSS:

- May 2011: **The State Superintendent of Public Instruction will review and is anticipated to adopt the next generation of state content standards in English language arts and mathematics. The State Superintendent may establish an effective implementation date of these new content standards as July 1, 2013**, to allow local school districts sufficient time to prepare for and deploy necessary curricular changes and to provide for a properly aligned state assessment system.
- 2011-12: **The state will proceed to develop a curriculum template model for both English language arts and mathematics that will be made available to all districts for their consideration, amendment, and voluntary adoption.** This model will be developed by representative curriculum leaders and content specialists from across the state under the facilitation of the North Dakota Curriculum Initiative. Curriculum template development work will commence in June 2011.
- 2012-13: **Local school districts will voluntarily review and consider the possible adoption of the curriculum template model as the basis for establishing their own local school curricula** in English language arts and mathematics based on the state's new content standards based on the national CCSS. Local school districts will assume responsibility for the adoption of their preferred curriculum model.
- 2013-14: Effective July 1, 2013 and beginning with the 2013-14 school year, the state will align all assessment policies to the state's new content standards based on the national CCSS for full assessment deployment during 2014-15. In November 2013, the current North Dakota State Assessment will be administered for the final time, based on the previous year's content standards. **The 2013-14 school year marks the full implementation of the state's new content standards based on the CCSS.**
- 2014-15: **The state will initiate its new assessment system, possibly based on the efforts of a multi-state assessment consortium.** The state currently participates in three national assessment consortia, whose assessments will be aligned fully to the CCSS and allow for valid and reliable measures of student achievement within and among participating states. More information on these consortia will be forthcoming in the near future.

This proposed implementation timeline allows the state and local school districts to proceed with efforts to create a meaningful curriculum and assessment system that is aligned to the state's new academic content standards and that meets the various provisions of state and federal law. The Department will provide additional information regarding each of these development phases in the near future.

III. North Dakota Curriculum Initiative establishes a statewide effort to develop a curriculum template, based on the state's new academic content standards

The North Dakota Curriculum Initiative (NDCI), a statewide curriculum and professional development program administered through the North Dakota State University and funded through state Title IIA funds, **is preparing to advance a statewide program using K-12 content and curriculum specialists from across the state to develop a common curriculum template.** This curriculum template is to be made available **free-of-charge** to assist all local school districts **to implement successfully a voluntary curriculum, based on the state's new content standards.** This NDCI effort is designed to meet recent observations among educators, including the statewide standards development committee and other teachers and administrators, to provide for an effective and efficient means of developing curriculum models without unnecessary duplication of effort across the state's 180 school districts.

This effort to develop a common curriculum template, based on the new state academic content standards, will optimize development activities, shorten development cycles, increase cost effectiveness, improve collaboration among educators and districts, and hopefully produce better products than might otherwise be accomplished by a single school district. **This effort could produce a variety of deliverables for both English language arts and mathematics at all grade levels**, including a common curriculum guide, a master pace guide, detailed standards precursor and post-cursor skill markers, commentary regarding the unpacking of individual standards to better interpret their implied meaning, detailed instructional materials, unit-level organizational aids, identification of problematic content and instructional standards with supporting remediation measures, detailed audio-visual professional development supports, student and parent aids, among other products. This curriculum template development effort will also benefit from the various similar contributions of states involved in similar activities nationwide. This potentially represents a truly expansive, collaborative effort among educators across the nation, especially those states that participate in the various multi-state assessment consortia.

Any deliverables produced through this effort will be made available to all school districts for their voluntary adoption, amendment, or rejection in the subsequent rollout of their respective curricula. There exists **no expectation or mandate** that these curriculum template materials be adopted by local school districts.

The cost of this curriculum template development activity will be assumed by the Department of Public Instruction, using state Title IIA and VI funds, for certain prescribed levels of work, through a direct grant to the North Dakota State University's NDCI. If the development work of this curriculum template effort requires additional financial resources beyond its prescribed levels, the NDCI may initiate contacts with school districts to solicit voluntary contributions to the effort, including the restrictive, voluntary adoption of costs for select committee members' costs or other in-kind, locally determined contributions.

Under no conditions will any curriculum template development costs be affixed to or payment be required by local school districts. Any local school district contributions will be strictly voluntary.

This curriculum template development work will involve approximately 90 educators, including K-12 and university personnel, working in the two primary subject areas. Additionally, separate

review and validation committees of educators will provide critical analysis of the primary committees' work. The NDCI will employ the full benefit of its advisory committee of K-12 educators to help guide the effort, including the creation of several specialist advisory subcommittees that will include larger school district curriculum directors, Regional Education Association coordinators, Small Organized School representatives, and University System curriculum specialists. In the near future, the DPI and the NDCI will provide additional information through joint communications that may require your attention. Shortly, you will be approached to make nominations for advisory committee and drafting committee assignments for the various elements of the effort. We also welcome any questions and comments you might have regarding any aspect of this work. The actual curriculum template development work will begin in June 2011 and run throughout the 2011-12 school year. The membership of the development and advisory committees will be established during April – May 2011.

Thank you for the positive contributions you as educational leaders have provided throughout the development phases of the state's new academic content standards, based on the CCSS. Your helpful suggestions have helped to guide the development of this curriculum template proposal. **We have every expectation that this work will produce meaningful results, which will aid all local school districts to advance your critically important educational mission.** I am available to address any questions you might have regarding this work (328-1838 or ggallagher@nd.gov).

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this matter. I look forward to providing additional information in the near future.

Attachment 5

Memorandum of understanding or letter from a state network of institutions of higher education (IHEs) certifying that meeting the state's standards corresponds to being college- and career-ready without the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level (if applicable)

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
For
Race To The Top – Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant

**PARTNERSHIP FOR ASSESSMENT OF READINESS FOR COLLEGE AND
CAREERS MEMBERS**

JUNE 3, 2010

I. Parties

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is made and effective as of this Third day of June 2010, (the “Effective Date”) by and between the State of North Dakota and all other member states of the Partnership For Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (“Consortium” or “PARCC”) who have also executed this MOU.

II. Scope of MOU

This MOU constitutes an understanding between the Consortium member states to participate in the Consortium. This document describes the purpose and goals of the Consortium, presents its background, explains its organizational and governance structure, and defines the terms, responsibilities and benefits of participation in the Consortium.

III. Background – Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant

On April 9, 2010, the Department of Education (“ED”) announced its intent to provide grant funding to consortia of States for two grant categories under the Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program: (a) Comprehensive Assessment Systems grants, and (b) High School Course Assessment grants. 75 Fed. Reg. 18171 (April 9, 2010) (“Notice”).

The Comprehensive Assessment Systems grant will support the development of new assessment systems that measure student knowledge and skills against a common set of college- and career-ready standards in mathematics and English language arts in a way that covers the full range of those standards, elicits complex student demonstrations or applications of knowledge and skills as appropriate, and provides an accurate measure of student achievement across the full performance continuum and an accurate measure of student growth over a full academic year or course.

IV. Purpose and Goals

The states that are signatories to this MOU are members of a consortium (Partnership For Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) that have organized themselves to apply for and carry out the objectives of the Comprehensive Assessment Systems grant program.

Consortium states have identified the following major purposes and uses for the assessment system results:

- To measure and document students' college and career readiness by the end of high school and progress toward this target. Students meeting the college and career readiness standards will be eligible for placement into entry-level credit-bearing, rather than remedial, courses in public 2- and 4-year postsecondary institutions in all participating states.
- To provide assessments and results that:
 - Are comparable across states at the student level;
 - Meet internationally rigorous benchmarks;
 - Allow valid measures of student longitudinal growth; and
 - Serve as a signal for good instructional practices.
- To support multiple levels and forms of accountability including:
 - Decisions about promotion and graduation for individual students;
 - Teacher and leader evaluations;
 - School accountability determinations;
 - Determinations of principal and teacher professional development and support needs; and
 - Teaching, learning, and program improvement.
- Assesses all students, including English learners and students with disabilities.

To further these goals, States that join the Consortium by signing this MOU mutually agree to support the work of the Consortium as described in the PARCC application for funding under the Race to the Top Assessment Program.

V. Definitions

This MOU incorporates and adopts the terms defined in the Department of Education's Notice, which is appended hereto as Addendum 1.

VI. Key Deadlines

The Consortium has established key deadlines and action items for all Consortium states, as specified in Table (A)(1)(b)(v) and Section (A)(1) of its proposal. The following milestones represent major junctures during the grant period when the direction of the Consortium's work will be clarified, when the Consortium must make key decisions, and when member states must make additional commitments to the Consortium and its work.

- A. The Consortium shall develop procedures for the administration of its duties, set forth in By-Laws, which will be adopted at the first meeting of the Governing Board.
- B. The Consortium shall adopt common assessment administration procedures no later than the spring of 2011.

- C. The Consortium shall adopt a common set of item release policies no later than the spring of 2011.
- D. The Consortium shall adopt a test security policy no later than the spring of 2011.
- E. The Consortium shall adopt a common definition of “English learner” and common policies and procedures for student participation and accommodations for English learners no later than the spring of 2011.
- F. The Consortium shall adopt common policies and procedures for student participation and accommodations for students with disabilities no later than the spring of 2011.
- G. Each Consortium state shall adopt a common set of college- and career-ready standards no later than December 31, 2011.
- H. The Consortium shall adopt a common set of common performance level descriptors no later than the summer of 2014.
- I. The Consortium shall adopt a common set of achievement standards no later than the summer of 2015.

VII. Consortium Membership

A. Membership Types and Responsibilities

- 1. **Governing State:** A State becomes a Governing State if it meets the eligibility criteria in this section.
 - a. The eligibility criteria for a Governing State are as follows:
 - (i) A Governing State may not be a member of any other consortium that has applied for or receives grant funding from the Department of Education under the Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program for the Comprehensive Course Assessment Systems grant category;
 - (ii) A Governing State must be committed to statewide implementation and administration of the assessment system developed by the Consortium no later than the 2014-2015 school year, subject to availability of funds;
 - (iii) A Governing State must be committed to using the assessment results in its accountability system, including for school accountability determinations;

teacher and leader evaluations; and teaching, learning and program improvement;

- (iv) A Governing State must provide staff to the Consortium to support the activities of the Consortium as follows:
- Coordinate the state's overall participation in all aspects of the project, including:
 - ongoing communication within the state education agency, with local school systems, teachers and school leaders, higher education leaders;
 - communication to keep the state board of education, governor's office and appropriate legislative leaders and committees informed of the consortium's activities and progress on a regular basis;
 - participation by local schools and education agencies in pilot tests and field test of system components; and
 - identification of barriers to implementation.
 - Participate in the management of the assessment development process on behalf of the Consortium;
 - Represent the chief state school officer when necessary in Governing Board meetings and calls;
 - Participate on Design Committees that will:
 - Develop the overall assessment design for the Consortium;
 - Develop content and test specifications;
 - Develop and review Requests for Proposals (RFPs);
 - Manage contract(s) for assessment system development;
 - Recommend common achievement levels;
 - Recommend common assessment policies; and
 - Other tasks as needed.
- (v) A Governing State must identify and address the legal, statutory, regulatory and policy barriers it must change in order for the State to adopt and implement

the Consortium's assessment system components by the 2014-15 school year.

- b. A Governing State has the following additional rights and responsibilities:
- (i) A Governing State has authority to participate with other Governing States to determine and/or to modify the major policies and operational procedures of the Consortium, including the Consortium's work plan and theory of action;
 - (ii) A Governing State has authority to participate with other Governing States to provide direction to the Project Management Partner, the Fiscal Agent, and to any other contractors or advisors retained by or on behalf of the Consortium that are compensated with Grant funds;
 - (iii) A Governing State has authority to participate with other Governing States to approve the design of the assessment system that will be developed by the Consortium;
 - (iv) A Governing State must participate in the work of the Consortium's design and assessment committees;
 - (v) A Governing State must participate in pilot and field testing of the assessment systems and tools developed by the Consortium, in accordance with the Consortium's work plan;
 - (vi) A Governing State must develop a plan for the statewide implementation of the Consortium's assessment system by 2014-2015, including removing or resolving statutory, regulatory and policy barriers to implementation, and securing funding for implementation;
 - (vii) A Governing State may receive funding from the Consortium to defray the costs associated with staff time devoted to governance of the Consortium, if such funding is included in the Consortium budget;
 - (viii) A Governing State may receive funding from the Consortium to defray the costs associated with intra-State communications and engagements, if such funding is included in the Consortium budget.

- (ix) A Governing State has authority to vote upon significant grant fund expenditures and disbursements (including awards of contracts and subgrants) made to and/or executed by the Fiscal Agent, Governing States, the Project Management Partner, and other contractors or subgrantees.

2. **Fiscal Agent:** The Fiscal Agent will be one of the Governing States in the Consortium.

- (i) The Fiscal Agent will serve as the “Applicant” state for purposes of the grant application, applying as the member of the Consortium on behalf of the Consortium, pursuant to the Application Requirements of the Notice (Addendum 1) and 34 C.F.R. 75.128.
- (ii) The Fiscal Agent shall have a fiduciary responsibility to the Consortium to manage and account for the grant funds provided by the Federal Government under the Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems grants, including related administrative functions, subject to the direction and approval of the Governing Board regarding the expenditure and disbursement of all grant funds, and shall have no greater decision-making authority regarding the expenditure and disbursement of grant funds than any other Governing State;
- (iii) The Fiscal Agent shall issue RFPs in order to procure goods and services on behalf of the Consortium;
- (iv) The Fiscal Agent has the authority, with the Governing Board’s approval, to designate another Governing State as the issuing entity of RFPs for procurements on behalf of the Consortium;
- (v) The Fiscal Agent shall enter into a contract or subgrant with the organization selected to serve as the Consortium’s Project Management Partner;
- (vi) The Fiscal Agent may receive funding from the Consortium in the form of disbursements from Grant funding, as authorized by the Governing Board, to cover the costs associated with carrying out its

responsibilities as a Fiscal Agent, if such funding is included in the Consortium budget;

- (vii) The Fiscal Agent may enter into significant contracts for services to assist the grantee to fulfill its obligation to the Federal Government to manage and account for grant funds;
- (viii) Consortium member states will identify and report to the Fiscal Agent, and the Fiscal Agent will report to the Department of Education, pursuant to program requirement 11 identified in the Notice for Comprehensive Assessment System grantees, any current assessment requirements in Title I of the ESEA that would need to be waived in order for member States to fully implement the assessment system developed by the Consortium.

3. Participating State

- a. The eligibility criteria for a Participating State are as follows:
 - (i) A Participating State commits to support and assist with the Consortium's execution of the program described in the PARCC application for a Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program grant, consistent with the rights and responsibilities detailed below, but does not at this time make the commitments of a Governing State;
 - (ii) A Participating State may be a member of more than one consortium that applies for or receives grant funds from ED for the Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program for the Comprehensive Assessment Systems grant category.
- b. The rights and responsibilities of a Participating State are as follows:
 - (i) A Participating State is encouraged to provide staff to participate on the Design Committees, Advisory Committees, Working Groups or other similar groups established by the Governing Board;
 - (ii) A Participating State shall review and provide feedback to the Design Committees and to the Governing Board regarding the design plans,

strategies and policies of the Consortium as they are being developed;

- (iii) A Participating State must participate in pilot and field testing of the assessment systems and tools developed by the Consortium, in accordance with the Consortium's work plan; and
- (iv) A Participating State is not eligible to receive reimbursement for the costs it may incur to participate in certain activities of the Consortium.

4. Proposed Project Management Partner:

Consistent with the requirements of ED's Notice, the PARCC Governing States are conducting a competitive procurement to select the consortium Project Management Partner. The PARCC Governing Board will direct and oversee the work of the organization selected to be the Project Management Partner.

B. Recommitment to the Consortium

In the event that the governor or chief state school officer is replaced in a Consortium state, the successor in that office shall affirm in writing to the Governing Board Chair the State's continued commitment to participation in the Consortium and to the binding commitments made by that official's predecessor within five (5) months of taking office.

C. Application Process For New Members

1. A State that wishes to join the Consortium after submission of the grant application may apply for membership in the Consortium at any time, provided that the State meets the prevailing eligibility requirements associated with its desired membership classification in the Consortium. The state's Governor, Chief State School Officer, and President of the State Board of Education (if applicable) must sign a MOU with all of the commitments contained herein, and the appropriate state higher education leaders must sign a letter making the same commitments as those made by higher education leaders in the states that have signed this MOU.
2. A State that joins the Consortium after the grant application is submitted to the Department of Education is not authorized to re-open settled issues, nor may it participate in the review of proposals for Requests for Proposals that have already been issued.

D. Membership Opt-Out Process

At any time, a State may withdraw from the Consortium by providing written notice to the chair of the Governing Board, signed by the individuals holding the same positions that signed the MOU, at least ten (10) days prior to the effective date of the withdrawal, including an explanation of reasons for the withdrawal.

VIII. Consortium Governance

This section of the MOU details the process by which the Consortium shall conduct its business.

A. Governing Board

1. The Governing Board shall be comprised of the chief state school officer or designee from each Governing State;
2. The Governing Board shall make decisions regarding major policy, design, operational and organizational aspects of the Consortium's work, including:
 - a. Overall design of the assessment system;
 - b. Common achievement levels;
 - c. Consortium procurement strategy;
 - d. Modifications to governance structure and decision-making process;
 - e. Policies and decisions regarding control and ownership of intellectual property developed or acquired by the Consortium (including without limitation, test specifications and blue prints, test forms, item banks, psychometric information, and other measurement theories/practices), provided that such policies and decisions:
 - (i) will provide equivalent rights to such intellectual property to all states participating in the Consortium, regardless of membership type;
 - (ii) will preserve the Consortium's flexibility to acquire intellectual property to the assessment systems as the Consortium may deem necessary and consistent with "best value" procurement principles, and with due regard for the Notice requirements regarding broad availability of such intellectual property except as otherwise protected by law or agreement as proprietary information.

3. The Governing Board shall form Design, Advisory and other committees, groups and teams (“committees”) as it deems necessary and appropriate to carry out the Consortium’s work, including those identified in the PARCC grant application.
 - a. The Governing Board will define the charter for each committee, to include objectives, timeline, and anticipated work product, and will specify which design and policy decisions (if any) may be made by the committee and which must be elevated to the Governing Board for decision;
 - b. When a committee is being formed, the Governing Board shall seek nominations for members from all states in the Consortium;
 - c. Design Committees that were formed during the proposal development stage shall continue with their initial membership, though additional members may be added at the discretion of the Governing Board;
 - d. In forming committees, the Governing Board will seek to maximize involvement across the Consortium, while keeping groups to manageable sizes in light of time and budget constraints;
 - e. Committees shall share drafts of their work products, when appropriate, with all PARCC states for review and feedback; and
 - f. Committees shall make decisions by consensus; but where consensus does not exist the committee shall provide the options developed to the Governing Board for decision (except as the charter for a committee may otherwise provide).
4. The Governing Board shall be chaired by a chief state school officer from one Governing State.
 - a. The Governing Board Chair shall serve a one-year term, which may be renewed.
 - b. The Governing States shall nominate candidates to serve as the Governing Board Chair, and the Governing Board Chair shall be selected by majority vote.
 - c. The Governing Board Chair shall have the following responsibilities:
 - (i) To provide leadership to the Governing Board to ensure that it operates in an efficient, effective, and

orderly manner. The tasks related to these responsibilities include:

- (a) Ensure that the appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the effective management of the Governing Board and the Consortium;
 - (b) Assist in managing the affairs of the Governing Board, including chairing meetings of the Governing Board and ensure that each meeting has a set agenda, is planned effectively and is conducted according to the Consortium's policies and procedures and addresses the matters identified on the meeting agenda;
 - (c) Represent the Governing Board, and act as a spokesperson for the Governing Board if and when necessary;
 - (d) Ensure that the Governing Board is managed effectively by, among other actions, supervising the Project Management Partner; and
 - (e) Serve as in a leadership capacity by encouraging the work of the Consortium, and assist in resolving any conflicts.
5. The Consortium shall adhere to the timeline provided in the grant application for making major decisions regarding the Consortium's work plan.
- a. The timeline shall be updated and distributed by the Project Management Partner to all Consortium states on a quarterly basis.
6. Participating States may provide input for Governing Board decisions, as described below.
7. Governing Board decisions shall be made by consensus; where consensus is not achieved among Governing States, decisions shall be made by a vote of the Governing States. Each State has one vote. Votes of a supermajority of the Governing States are necessary for a decision to be reached.
- a. The supermajority of the Governing States is currently defined as a majority of Governing States plus one additional State;
 - b. The Governing Board shall, from time to time as necessary, including as milestones are reached and additional States become

Governing States, evaluate the need to revise the votes that are required to reach a decision, and may revise the definition of supermajority, as appropriate. The Governing Board shall make the decision to revise the definition of supermajority by consensus, or if consensus is not achieved, by a vote of the supermajority as currently defined at the time of the vote.

8. The Governing Board shall meet quarterly to consider issues identified by the Board Chair, including but not limited to major policy decisions of the Consortium.

B. Design Committees

1. One or more Design Committees will be formed by the Governing Board to develop plans for key areas of Consortium work, such as recommending the assessment system design and development process, to oversee the assessment development work performed by one or more vendors, to recommend achievement levels and other assessment policies, and address other issues as needed. These committees will be comprised of state assessment directors and other key representatives from Governing States and Participating States.
2. Design Committees shall provide recommendations to the Governing Board regarding major decisions on issues such as those identified above, or as otherwise established in their charters.
 - a. Recommendations are made on a consensus basis, with input from the Participating States.
 - b. Where consensus is not achieved by a Design Committee, the Committee shall provide alternative recommendations to the Governing Board, and describe the strengths and weaknesses of each recommendation.
 - c. Design Committees, with support from the Project Management Partner, shall make and keep records of decisions on behalf of the Consortium regarding assessment policies, operational matters and other aspects of the Consortium's work if a Design Committee's charter authorizes it to make decisions without input from or involvement of the Governing Board.
 - d. Decisions reserved to Design Committees by their charters shall be made by consensus; but where consensus is not achieved decisions shall be made by a vote of Governing States on each Design Committee. Each Governing State on the committee has one vote. Votes of a majority of the Governing States on a Design Committee, plus one, are necessary for a decision to be reached.

3. The selection of successful bidders in response to RFPs issued on behalf of the Consortium shall be made in accordance with the procurement laws and regulations of the State that issues the RFP, as described more fully in Addendum 3 of this MOU.
 - a. To the extent permitted by the procurement laws and regulations of the issuing State, appropriate staff of the Design Committees who were involved in the development of the RFP shall review the proposals, shall provide feedback to the issuing State on the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal, and shall identify the proposal believed to represent the best value for the Consortium members, including the rationale for this conclusion.

C. General Assembly of All Consortium States

1. There shall be two convenings of all Consortium states per year, for the purpose of reviewing the progress of the Consortium's work, discussing and providing input into upcoming decisions of the Governing Board and Design Committees, and addressing other issues of concern to the Consortium states.
 - a. A leadership team (comprised of chief state school officers, and other officials from the state education agency, state board of education, governor's office, higher education leaders and others as appropriate) from each state shall be invited to participate in one annual meeting.
 - b. Chief state school officers or their designees only shall be invited to the second annual convening.
2. In addition to the two annual convenings, Participating States shall also have the opportunity to provide input and advice to the Governing Board and to the Design Committees through a variety of means, including:
 - a. Participation in conference calls and/or webinars;
 - b. Written responses to draft documents; and
 - c. Participation in Google groups that allow for quick response to documents under development.

IX. Benefits of Participation

Participation in the Consortium offers a number of benefits. For example, member States will have opportunities for:

- A. Possible coordinated cooperative purchase discounts;

- B. Possible discount software license agreements;
- C. Access to a cooperative environment and knowledge-base to facilitate information-sharing for educational, administrative, planning, policy and decision-making purposes;
- D. Shared expertise that can stimulate the development of higher quality assessments in an efficient and cost-effective manner;
- E. Cooperation in the development of improved instructional materials, professional development and teacher preparation programs aligned to the States' standards and assessments; and
- F. Obtaining comparable data that will enable policymakers and teachers to compare educational outcomes and to identify effective instructional practices and strategies.

X. Binding Commitments and Assurances

A. Binding Assurances Common To All States – Participating and Governing

Each State that joins the Consortium, whether as a Participating State or a Governing State, hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1. Has all requisite power and authority necessary to execute this MOU;
- 2. Is familiar with the Consortium's Comprehensive Assessment Systems grant application under the ED's Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program and is supportive of and will work to implement the Consortium's plan, as defined by the Consortium and consistent with Addendum 1 (Notice);
- 3. Will cooperate fully with the Consortium and will carry out all of the responsibilities associated with its selected membership classification;
- 4. Will, as a condition of continued membership in the Consortium, adopt a common set of college- and career-ready standards no later than December 31, 2011, and common achievement standards no later than the 2014-2015 school year;
- 5. Will, as a condition of continued membership in the Consortium, ensure that the summative components of the assessment system (in both mathematics and English language arts) will be fully implemented statewide no later than the 2014-2015 school year, subject to the availability of funds;
- 6. Will conduct periodic reviews of its State laws, regulations and policies to identify any barriers to implementing the proposed assessment system and

address any such barriers prior to full implementation of the summative assessment components of the system:

- a. The State will take the necessary steps to accomplish implementation as described in Addendum 2 of this MOU.
7. Will use the Consortium-developed assessment systems to meet the assessment requirements in Title I of the ESEA;
8. Will actively promote collaboration and alignment between the State and its public elementary and secondary education systems and their public Institutions of Higher Education ("IHE") or systems of IHEs. The State will endeavor to:
 - a. Maintain the commitments from participating public IHEs or IHE systems to participate in the design and development of the Consortium's high school summative assessments;
 - b. Obtain commitments from additional public IHEs or IHE systems to participate in the design and development of the Consortium's high school summative assessments;
 - c. Involve participating public IHEs or IHE systems in the Consortium's research-based process to establish common achievement standards on the new assessments that signal students' preparation for entry level, credit-bearing coursework; and
 - d. Obtain commitments from public IHEs or IHE systems to use the assessment in all partnership states' postsecondary institutions, along with any other placement requirement established by the IHE or IHE system, as an indicator of students' readiness for placement in non-remedial, credit-bearing college-level coursework.
9. Will provide the required assurances regarding accountability, transparency, reporting, procurement and other assurances and certifications; and
10. Consents to be bound by every statement and assurance in the grant application.

B. Additional Binding Assurances By Governing States

In addition to the assurances and commitments required of all States in the Consortium, a Governing State is bound by the following additional assurances and commitments:

1. Provide personnel to the Consortium in sufficient number and qualifications and for sufficient time to support the activities of the Consortium as described in Section VII (A)(1)(a)(iv) of this MOU.

XI. Financial Arrangements

This MOU does not constitute a financial commitment on the part of the Parties. Any financial arrangements associated with the Consortium will be covered by separate project agreements between the Consortium members and other entities, and subject to ordinary budgetary and administrative procedures. It is understood that the ability of the Parties to carry out their obligations is subject to the availability of funds and personnel through their respective funding procedures.

XII. Personal Property

Title to any personal property, such as computers, computer equipment, office supplies, and office equipment furnished by a State to the Consortium under this MOU shall remain with the State furnishing the same. All parties agree to exercise due care in handling such property. However, each party agrees to be responsible for any damage to its property which occurs in the performance of its duties under this MOU, and to waive any claim against the other party for such damage, whether arising through negligence or otherwise.

XIII. Liability and Risk of Loss

- A. To the extent permitted by law, with regard to activities undertaken pursuant to this MOU, none of the parties to this MOU shall make any claim against one another or their respective instrumentalities, agents or employees for any injury to or death of its own employees, or for damage to or loss of its own property, whether such injury, death, damage or loss arises through negligence or otherwise.
- B. To the extent permitted by law, if a risk of damage or loss is not dealt with expressly in this MOU, such party's liability to another party, whether or not arising as the result of alleged breach of the MOU, shall be limited to direct damages only and shall not include loss of revenue or profits or other indirect or consequential damages.

XIV. Resolution of Conflicts

Conflicts which may arise regarding the interpretation of the clauses of this MOU will be resolved by the Governing Board, and that decision will be considered final and not subject to further appeal or to review by any outside court or other tribunal.

XV. Modifications

The content of this MOU may be reviewed periodically or amended at any time as agreed upon by vote of the Governing Board.

XVI. Duration, Renewal, Termination

- A. This MOU will take effect upon execution of this MOU by at least five States as “Governing States” and will have a duration through calendar year 2015, unless otherwise extended by agreement of the Governing Board.
- B. This MOU may be terminated by decision of the Governing Board, or by withdrawal or termination of a sufficient number of Governing States so that there are fewer than five Governing States.
- C. Any member State of the Consortium may be involuntarily terminated by the Governing Board as a member for breach of any term of this MOU, or for breach of any term or condition that may be imposed by the Department of Education, the Consortium Governing Board, or of any applicable bylaws or regulations.

XVII. Points of Contact

Communications with the State regarding this MOU should be directed to:

Name: Greg Gallagher, Director, Standards and Achievement

Mailing Address: North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
600 East Boulevard Avenue, Dept 201
Bismarck, ND 58505-0440

Telephone: (701) 328-1838

Fax: (701) 328-4770

E-mail: ggallagher@nd.gov

Or hereafter to such other individual as may be designated by the State in writing transmitted to the Chair of the Governing Board and/or to the PARCC Project Management Partner.

XVIII. Signatures and Intent To Join in the Consortium

The State of North Dakota hereby joins the Consortium as a Participating State, and agrees to be bound by all of the assurances and commitments associated with the Participating State membership classification. Further, the State of North Dakota agrees to perform the duties and carry out the responsibilities associated with the Participating State membership classification.

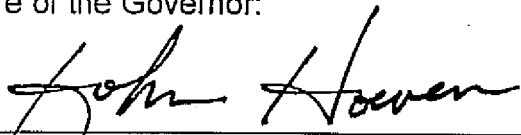
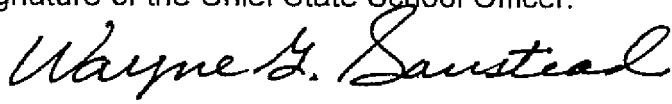
Signatures required:

- Each State’s Governor;
- Each State’s chief school officer; and
- If applicable, the president of the State board of education.

Addenda:

- **Addendum 1:** Department of Education Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010.
- **Addendum 2:** Each State describes the process it plans to follow to ensure that it will be able to implement the assessment systems developed by the Consortium by the 2014-2015 school year, pursuant to Assurance 6 in Section X of this MOU.
- **Addendum 3:** Signature of each State's chief procurement official confirming that the State is able to participate in the Consortium's procurement process.

STATE SIGNATURE BLOCK

State of:	
North Dakota	
Signature of the Governor:	
	
Printed Name:	Date:
John Hoeven, Governor	6-4-10
Signature of the Chief State School Officer:	
	
Printed Name:	Date:
Wayne G. Sanstead, State Superintendent	06-03-10

ADDENDUM 2:
**NORTH DAKOTA ASSURANCE REGARDING PROCESS AND PLANS FOR
IMPLEMENTING PROPOSED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM**

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
For
Race To The Top -- Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Partnership For
Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers Members

ADDENDUM 2: ASSURANCE REGARDING PROCESS AND PLANS FOR
IMPLEMENTING PROPOSED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

June 3, 2010

Plan of North Dakota

The State of North Dakota provides assurances that it will adopt new state assessments for all students, as set forth within this proposal, that are aligned to the state's content standards in ELA and mathematics, which are based on the Common Core Standards, for the 2014-15 academic year and for future outlying years.

- A. The state will participate as a Participating member state within the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Consortium. The state will remain as a Participating member state of the PARCC Consortium during the design and development phases of the project. The state will participate fully in related design, development, piloting, and implementation, and evaluation activities, as set forth within the PARCC Consortium design, for as long as the state remains as a formally enrolled Participating member state.
- B. The state has entered into all agreements regarding its participation as a member state in the PARCC Consortium through the established Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the Governor, the State Superintendent, the State Procurement Officer, and the University System, including the Chancellor and the various Presidents of the state's institutions of higher education, effective June 2010 and with any subsequent amendments to the MOU.
- C. The Department of Public Instruction will act as primary agent with the PARCC Consortium to facilitate the engagement of state educators in the design, development, implementation, and evaluation phases of the assessment projects. The state will engage its primary assessment advisory committee, the Standards Assessment, Learning and Teaching (SALT) Committee to advise the Department on any planning activities that require the input of educators or which might impact the state's longer term standards, assessment, or accountability reporting efforts. The State Superintendent will approve any administrative or policy matters arising from the multi-state consortia's activities, according to the terms of the MOU and the state's assessment administration protocols.
- D. The Department will review the status of the PARCC Consortium's design and development efforts and those efforts of a separate other consortium and determine the assessment system model that will best meet the state's assessment system needs by July 2013. The Department will recommend to the parties of the MOU that

ADDENDUM 2:
NORTH DAKOTA ASSURANCE REGARDING PROCESS AND PLANS FOR
IMPLEMENTING PROPOSED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

the state select a single multi-state consortium model that best suits the state's longer term needs and will proceed to withdraw from the alternate consortium.

- E. The state will prepare any supplemental budget proposals for the 2013 ND Legislative Assembly that will enable the state to fully participate in the best and most efficient consortium's assessment model during the 2013-15 biennium. The SALT Committee and other external associations will advise the Department on the most desirable means of achieving a coherent assessment system, including formative, interim, and summative assessments, that meets the needs of all students.
- F. The state will administer the state's current assessment model and supporting contracts through the 2013-14 academic year.
- G. The state will transition into and administer the state's new assessment model arising from these multi-state consortium efforts, according to agreeable procurement procedures, during the 2014-15 academic year. The state will administer the various program support components, including professional development, which will arise from the state's selected assessment model.
- H. The state will actively engage statewide educators in the process of designing a viable state growth model in collaboration with the selected multi-state consortium's efforts by July 2014. The resulting growth model will be incorporated into the state's accountability system as a means of providing meaningful instructional supports. Additionally, the Department will petition the U.S. Department of Education to adopt the state's proposed growth model as a component of any future accountability reporting plan that would meet the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- I. The Department will actively engage statewide educators in the process of designing meaningful assessment supports that will aid classroom formative instruction (i.e., formative assessment) by July 2014. This effort will build upon the formative and interim assessment efforts of the two multi-state assessment consortia.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
For
Race To The Top -- Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Partnership For
Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers Consortium Members

ADDENDUM 3: ASSURANCE REGARDING PARTICIPATION
IN CONSORTIUM PROCUREMENT PROCESS

June 2, 2010

The signature of the chief procurement official of North Dakota on Addendum 3 to the Memorandum of Understanding for the Race to the Top Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Partnership For Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers ("Consortium") Members constitutes an assurance that the chief procurement official has determined that North Dakota may, consistent with its applicable procurement laws and regulations, participate in and make procurements using the Consortium's procurement processes described herein.

I. Consortium Procurement Process

This section describes the procurement process that will be used by the Consortium. The Governing Board of the Consortium reserves the right to revise this procurement process as necessary and appropriate, consistent with its prevailing governance and operational policies and procedures. In the event of any such revision, the Consortium shall furnish a revised Addendum Three to each State in the Consortium for the signature by its chief procurement official.

1. *Competitive Procurement Process; Best Value Source Selection.* The Consortium will procure supplies and services that are necessary to carry out its objectives as defined by the Governing Board of the Consortium and as described in the grant application by a competitive process and will make source selection determinations on a "best value" basis.
2. *Compliance with federal procurement requirements.* The Consortium procurement process shall comply with all applicable federal procurement requirements, including the requirements of the Department of Education's grant regulation at 34 CFR § 80.36, "Procurement," and the requirements applicable to projects funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 ("ARRA").
3. *Lead State for Procurement.* The Fiscal Agent of the Consortium shall act as the Lead State for Procurement on behalf of the Consortium, or shall designate another Governing State to serve the Consortium in this capacity. The Lead State for Procurement shall conduct procurements in a manner consistent with its own procurement statutes and regulations.
4. *Types of Procurements to be Conducted.* The Lead State for Procurement shall conduct two types of procurements: (a) procurements with the grant funds provided by the Department of Education to the Fiscal Agent, and (b) procurements funded by a Consortium member State's non-grant funds.

ADDENDUM 3:
NORTH DAKOTA ASSURANCE REGARDING PARTICIPATION IN CONSORTIUM
PROCUREMENT PROCESS

5. *Manner of Conducting Procurements with Grant Funds.* Procurements with grant funds shall be for the acquisition of supplies and/or services relating only to the design, development, and evaluation of the Consortium's assessment system, and a vendor awarded a contract in this category shall be paid by grant funds disbursed by the Fiscal Agent at the direction of the Governing Board of the Consortium. The Lead State for Procurement shall conduct the procurement and perform the following tasks, and such other tasks as may be required or necessary to conduct the procurement effectively, in a manner consistent with its own State procurement laws and regulations, provided however that such procurements involve a competitive process and best value source selection:
 - a. Issue the Request for Proposal;
 - b. Receive and evaluate responsive proposals;
 - c. Make source selection determinations on a best value basis;
 - d. Execute a contract with the awardee(s);
 - e. Administer awarded contracts.
6. *Manner of Conducting Procurements with State Funds.* The Consortium shall conduct procurements related to the implementation of operational assessments using the cooperative purchasing model described in this section.
 - a. The Lead State for Procurement shall conduct such procurements and perform the following tasks, and such other tasks as may be required or necessary to conduct the procurement effectively, in a manner consistent with its own State procurement laws and regulations, provided however that such procurements involve a competitive process and best value source selection:
 - i. Issue the RFP, and include a provision that identifies the States in the Consortium and provides that each such State may make purchases or place orders under the contract resulting from the competition at the prices established during negotiations with offerors and at the quantities dictated by each ordering State;
 - ii. Receive and evaluate responsive proposals;
 - iii. Make source selection determinations on a best value basis;
 - iv. Execute a contract with the awardee(s);
 - v. Administer awarded contracts.
 - b. A Consortium State other than the Lead State for Procurement shall place orders or make purchases under a contract awarded by the Lead State for Procurement pursuant to the cooperative purchasing authority provided for under its state procurement code and regulations, or other similar authority as may exist or be created or permitted under the applicable laws and regulations of that State.
 - i. An ordering State shall execute an agreement ("Participating Addendum") with the contractor, which shall be incorporated into the contract. The Participating Addendum will address, as necessary, the scope of the relationship between the contractor and the State; any modifications to contract terms and conditions; the price agreement between the contractor and the State; the use of any servicing subcontractors and

ADDENDUM 3:
NORTH DAKOTA ASSURANCE REGARDING PARTICIPATION IN CONSORTIUM
PROCUREMENT PROCESS

lease agreements; and shall provide the contact information for key personnel in the State, and any other specific information as may be relevant and/or necessary.

II. Assurance Regarding Participation in Consortium Procurement Process

I, Angie Scherbenske, in my capacity as the chief procurement official for North Dakota, confirm by my signature below that North Dakota may, consistent with the procurement laws and regulations of North Dakota, participate in the Consortium procurement processes described in this Addendum 3 to the Memorandum of Understanding For Race To The Top – Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Consortium Members.

(b)(6)

Angie Scherbenske
Procurement Officer
State of North Dakota

6-3-10
Date

The Vital Link to a Brighter Future

June 9, 2010

Arne Duncan
U.S. Secretary of Education
Office of Secretary
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

As the Chancellor of the North Dakota University System in North Dakota, I would like to express strong support for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career and pledge to work collaboratively with our K-12 state counterparts and our higher education colleagues across the partnership states to develop high school assessments that can serve as an indicator of readiness for non-remedial, credit-bearing, college-level coursework in mathematics and English. We value the promise of the new Common Core State Standards to improve college readiness rates of direct matriculation high school students and the vision outlines for developing a common college-ready assessment.

We further recognize that the diverse missions of postsecondary systems and institutions in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career will determine the specific ways in which this new assessment will be used. We are, however, prepared to participate in the design, development, and standard setting process of the Partnership with the goal of using the new measure(s) as part of our course placement system once the Partnership has set the college readiness standards for the assessment(s).

In the 2008-09 school year, the IHE System included 5,889 direct matriculation students. We are committed to working with Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career toward ensuring that students who score college-ready on its end of high school assessments can enter credit-bearing coursework without remediation at this institution.

We are prepared to participate with the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career in the following next steps:

- A collaborative and comprehensive effort by K-12 and higher education faculty and leaders across the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career on test design and development.
- A coordinated effort across the consortium to design and participate in validity studies

State Capitol - 600 E Boulevard Ave Dept. 215, Bismarck ND 58505-0230
Phone: 701.328.2960 Fax: 701.328.2961 E-mail: NDUS.office@ndus.edu Web: www.ndus.edu

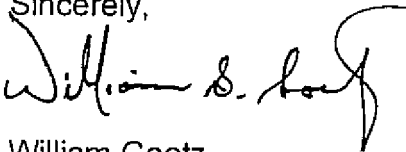
and comparisons with current placement instruments to ensure that the assessments developed are an accurate measure of college readiness.

- A thorough, research-based process to establish common achievement standards on the new assessments that signal students' preparation for entry level, credit-bearing coursework.
- Use of the assessment in all partnership states' postsecondary institutions, along with any other placement requirement established by the IHE or IHE system, as an indicator of students' readiness for placement in non-remedial, credit-bearing college-level coursework.

We strongly support further work to establish a better aligned P-20 education system that will help all of Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career students graduate from high school ready for college and careers, by providing students, their parents and their teachers with clear and consistent information about what it means and what it takes to be ready for college. We further commit ourselves to work collaboratively with our K-12 counterparts to improve associated student outreach, intervention, and academic preparation programs to ensure all students have the opportunity to successfully transition into our postsecondary system. We have the presidents and campus dean of the following institutions that have signed a nonbinding Letter of Intent in support of this initiative: Bismarck State College, Dickinson State University, Lake Region State College, Mayville State University, Minot State University, Dakota College at Bottineau, North Dakota State College of Science, North Dakota State University, University of North Dakota, Valley City State University, and Williston State College.

Thank you for providing the students in our state with the opportunity to benefit from such an important collaboration.

Sincerely,



William Goetz
Chancellor

**Total Number of Direct Matriculation Students in the IHE System in the
2008–2009 School Year**

	Name of Public IHE or IHE System (2- and 4-year)	Number of Direct Matriculation Students* in IHE in 2008-2009
	Bismarck State College	308
	Dickinson State University	203
	Lake Region State College	62
	Mayville State University	86
	Minot State University	319
	Dakota College at Bottineau	59
	North Dakota State College of Science	141
	North Dakota State University	2525
	University of North Dakota	1858
	Valley City State University	123
	Williston State College	119
	Non-Tribal Colleges, Total	5803
	Cankdeska Cikana Community	8
	Fort Berthold Community College	64
	Sitting Bull College	14
	Tribal Colleges, Total	86
STATEWIDE TOTAL		5,889

*Note: For the Race to the Top Comprehensive Assessment Systems Competition, the U.S. Department of Education defines **direct matriculation student** as a student who entered college as a freshman within two years of graduating from high school. (See page 75 of the Comprehensive Assessment Systems competition application, which is available online at: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-assessment/index.html>.)

Signature(s) for the State of:

North Dakota

Authorized State Signature:

William B. Goetz

Name:

William Goetz

Date:

6/9/10

Title: [State's higher education executive officer]

Chancellor, North Dakota University System

Authorized State Signature:

Bismarck State College

Name:

Barry Stoen

Date:

June 2, 2010

Title: [President or Head of Participating IHE or IHE system]

BSC President

Signature(s) for the State of:

North Dakota

Authorized State Signature:

William S. Goetz

Name:

William Goetz

Date:

6/9/10

Title: [State's higher education executive officer]

Chancellor, North Dakota University System

Authorized State Signature:

Richard J. McCallum

Dickinson State University

Name:

Richard J. McCallum

Date:

6-01-2010

Title: [President or Head of Participating IHE or IHE system]

President

Signature(s) for the State of:

North Dakota

Authorized State Signature:

William S. Goetz

Name:

William Goetz

Date:

6/9/10

Title: [State's higher education executive officer]

Chancellor, North Dakota University System

Authorized State Signature:

Mike Bower, Ph.D.

Lake Region State College, Devils Lake

Name:

Mike Bower, Ph.D.

Date:

05-27-10

Title: [President or Head of Participating IHE or IHE system]

President

Signature(s) for the State of:

North Dakota

Authorized State Signature:

William S. Goetz

Name:

William Goetz

Date:

6/9/10

Title: [State's higher education executive officer]

Chancellor, North Dakota University System

Authorized State Signature:

Mayville State University

Name:

Gary A. Ryan

Date:

6-2-10

Title: [President or Head of Participating IHE or IHE system]

Signature(s) for the State of:

North Dakota

Authorized State Signature:

William S. Goetz

Name:

William Goetz

Date:

6/9/10

Title: [State's higher education executive officer]

Chancellor, North Dakota University System

Authorized State Signature:

Minot State University

Name:

David J. Jahn

Date:

May 27, 2010

Title: [President or Head of Participating IHE or IHE system]

President - Minot State University

Signature(s) for the State of:

North Dakota

Authorized State Signature:

William S. Goetz

Name:

William Goetz

Date:

6/9/10

Title: [State's higher education executive officer]

Chancellor, North Dakota University System

Authorized State Signature:

John Richman

ND State College of Science, Wahpeton

Name:

John Richman

Date:

6-2-10

Title: [President or Head of Participating IHE or IHE system]

President

Signature(s) for the State of:

North Dakota

Authorized State Signature:

William S. Goetz

Name:

William Goetz

Date:

6/9/10

Title: [State's higher education executive officer]

Chancellor, North Dakota University System

Authorized State Signature:

Richard A. Hanson

North Dakota State University

Name:

Richard A. Hanson

Date:

6/1/2010

Title: ^{INTERIM} President or Head of Participating IHE or IHE system]

Signature(s) for the State of:

North Dakota

Authorized State Signature:

William S. Goetz

Name:

William Goetz

Date:

6/9/10

Title: [State's higher education executive officer]

Chancellor, North Dakota University System

Authorized State Signature:

University of North Dakota, Grand Forks

Name:

Robert A. Helling

Date:

5/28/10

Title: [President or Head of Participating IHE or IHE system]

Signature(s) for the State of:

North Dakota

Authorized State Signature:

William S. Goetz

Name:

William Goetz

Date:

6/9/10

Title: [State's higher education executive officer]

Chancellor, North Dakota University System

Authorized State Signature:

Steve W. Shirley

Valley City State University

Name:

STEVEN W. SHIRLEY

Date:

6-2-10

Title: (President or Head of Participating IHE or IHE system)

VALLEY CITY STATE UNIVERSITY

Signature(s) for the State of:

North Dakota

Authorized State Signature:

William S. Goetz

Name:

William Goetz

Date:

6/9/10

Title: [State's higher education executive officer]

Chancellor, North Dakota University System

Authorized State Signature:

Williston State College

Name:

Paul C. Day

Date:

6/1/10

Title: (President or Head of Participating IHE or IHE system)

Signature(s) for the State of:

North Dakota

Authorized State Signature:

William L. Goetz

Name:

William Goetz

Date:

6/9/10

Title: [State's higher education executive officer]

Chancellor, North Dakota University System

Authorized State Signature:

Dakota College at Bottineau

Name:

XEN CROSBY

Date:

6-2-10

Title: [President or Head of Participating IHE or IHE system]

CAMPUS DEAN

X

Plan for Identifying Existing State Barriers

Each State agrees to identify existing barriers in State laws, statutes, regulations, or policies by noting the barrier and the plan to remove the barrier. Each State agrees to use the table below as a planning tool for identifying existing barriers. States may choose to include any known barriers in the table below at the time of signing this MOU.

Barrier	Issue/Risk of Issue (if known)	Statute, Regulation, or Policy	Governing Body with Authority to Remove Barrier	Approximate Date to Initiate Action	Target Date for Removal of Barrier	Comments
State budget may be cut	Risk	Statute	Legislation	January 2013		
State may create conflicting legislation with grant	Risk	Statute	Legislation	Unknown		
State advisory committees may recommend adoption of Common Core Standards with conflicting content	Risk	Policy	State Superintendent	March 2011	December 2011	
State may elect to withdraw to implement another consortium's RTTT assessment model	Risk	Policy	State Superintendent	June 2013	September 2013	State is currently enrolled in two RTTT consortia
State may elect to adopt certain assessment and accountability measures, including alternate assessment models, that may become permissible under forthcoming ESEA reauthorization	Issue	Policy	State Superintendent	Unknown	Unknown	

**Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium
Document of Commitment**

Please sign and return by April 15, 2010 to
Tony Alpert, Director of Assessment, Oregon Department of Education

Email as PDF attachment to: Tony.Alpert@ode.state.or.us , or
Fax: 503-378-5156

The Document of Commitment may be returned after April 15, allowing a state to begin to participate as a voting Member State from the date of commitment. Signature on this document indicates support of decisions made prior to Consortia receipt of this document.

Complete descriptions of the responsibilities and time commitments of various levels of consortium governance are provided in the Governance Structure document. This initial governance structure refers to the proposal process only. Governance structure will be revised after proposal acceptance to reflect long-term needs during the grant implementation period.

State Name: North Dakota

Please indicate which governance levels are of interest to your state at this time.

- ☒ **Member State** – May also sign as member state for other consortia, may participate in setting general direction, may vote on selected issues.
- ☐ **Governing State** – May only sign with one consortia per competition category; has an active role in policy decisions, is committed to using the assessment system or program developed.

- ☐ Please consider my state for representation on the **steering committee**. (10 hr/wk)
- ☐ Please consider my state for representation on the **proposal design team** (20 hr/wk)
- ☒ We are interested in participating in the following **work groups** (variable hr/wk)
 - ☐ Item Specs/Quality Control, Writing/Constructed Response Scoring/Validity
 - ☐ Psychometrics, Reliability, Standard Setting, Reporting
 - ☐ Universal Design, Test Administration, Accommodations, Special Populations
 - ☐ Technical Specifications/Requirements
 - ☐ Communications and Documentation
 - ☐ External Validation, Research and Innovations
 - ☐ Professional Development and Capacity Building (IT and Human)
 - ☒ Formative and Benchmark Assessment
 - ☐ Performance-Based, Curriculum-Embedded Assessments
 - ☐ High School and Higher Education


Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead, State Superintendent

4-14-10
Date

Memorandum of Understanding
SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium
Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program: Comprehensive Assessment
Systems Grant Application

CFDA Number: 84.395B

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered as of **June 1, 2010**, by and between the **SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium** (the "Consortium") and the **State of North Dakota**, which has elected to participate in the Consortium as (check one)

 X An Advisory State (description in section e),

OR

 A Governing State (description in section e),

pursuant to the Notice Inviting Applications for the Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program for the Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application (Category A), henceforth referred to as the "Program," as published in the Federal Register on April 9, 2010 (75 FR 18171-18185).

The purpose of this MOU is to

- (a) Describe the Consortium vision and principles,
- (b) Detail the responsibilities of States in the Consortium,
- (c) Detail the responsibilities of the Consortium,
- (d) Describe the management of Consortium funds,
- (e) Describe the governance structure and activities of States in the Consortium,
- (f) Describe State entrance, exit, and status change,
- (g) Describe a plan for identifying existing State barriers, and
- (h) Bind each State in the Consortium to every statement and assurance made in the application through the following signature blocks:

(i)(A) Advisory State Assurance

OR

(i)(B) Governing State Assurance

AND

(ii) State Procurement Officer

(a) Consortium Vision and Principles

The Consortium's priorities for a new generation assessment system are rooted in a concern for the valid, reliable, and fair assessment of the deep disciplinary understanding and higher-order thinking skills that are increasingly demanded by a knowledge-based economy. These priorities are also rooted in a belief that assessment must support ongoing improvements in instruction and learning, and must be useful for all members of the educational enterprise: students, parents, teachers, school administrators, members of the public, and policymakers.

The Consortium intends to build a flexible system of assessment based upon the Common Core Standards in English language arts and mathematics with the intent that all students across this Consortium of States will know their progress toward college and career readiness.

The Consortium recognizes the need for a system of formative, interim, and summative assessments—organized around the Common Core Standards—that support high-quality learning, the demands of accountability, and that balance concerns for innovative assessment with the need for a fiscally sustainable system that is feasible to implement. The efforts of the Consortium will be organized to accomplish these goals.

The comprehensive assessment system developed by the Consortium will include the following key elements and principles:

1. A Comprehensive Assessment System that will be grounded in a thoughtfully integrated learning system of standards, curriculum, assessment, instruction and teacher development that will inform decision-making by including formative strategies, interim assessments, and summative assessments.
2. The assessment system will measure the full range of the Common Core Standards including those that measure higher-order skills and will inform progress toward and acquisition of readiness for higher education and multiple work domains. The system will emphasize deep knowledge of core concepts within and across the disciplines, problem solving, analysis, synthesis, and critical thinking.
3. Teachers will be involved in the design, development, and scoring of assessment items and tasks. Teachers will participate in the alignment of the Common Core Standards and the identification of the standards in the local curriculum.
4. Technology will be used to enable adaptive technologies to better measure student abilities across the full spectrum of student performance and evaluate growth in learning; to support online simulation tasks that test higher-order abilities; to score the results; and to deliver the responses to trained scorers/teachers to access from an

electronic platform. Technology applications will be designed to maximize interoperability across user platforms, and will utilize open-source development to the greatest extent possible.

5. A sophisticated design will yield scores to support evaluations of student growth, as well as school, teacher, and principal effectiveness in an efficient manner.
6. On-demand and curriculum-embedded assessments will be incorporated over time to allow teachers to see where students are on multiple dimensions of learning and to strategically support their progress.
7. All components of the system will incorporate principles of Universal Design that seek to remove construct-irrelevant aspects of tasks that could increase barriers for non-native English speakers and students with other specific learning needs.
8. Optional components will allow States flexibility to meet their individual needs.

(b) Responsibilities of States in the Consortium

Each State agrees to the following element of the Consortium's Assessment System:

- Adopt the Common Core Standards, which are college- and career-ready standards, and to which the Consortium's assessment system will be aligned, no later than December 31, 2011.

Each State that is a member of the Consortium in 2014–2015 also agrees to the following:

- Adopt common achievement standards no later than the 2014–2015 school year,
- Fully implement statewide the Consortium summative assessment in grades 3-8 and high school for both mathematics and English language arts no later than the 2014–2015 school year,
- Adhere to the governance as outlined in this document,
- Agree to support the decisions of the Consortium,
- Agree to follow agreed-upon timelines,
- Be willing to participate in the decision-making process and, if a Governing State, final decision, and
- Identify and implement a plan to address barriers in State law, statute, regulation, or policy to implementing the proposed assessment system and to addressing any such barriers prior to full implementation of the summative assessment components of the system.

(c) Responsibilities of the Consortium

The Consortium will provide the following by the 2014-15 school year:

1. A comprehensively designed assessment system that includes a strategic use of a variety of item types and performance assessments of modest scope to assess the full range of the Common Core Standards with an emphasis on problem solving, analysis, synthesis, and critical thinking.
2. An assessment system that incorporates a required summative assessment with optional formative/benchmark components which provides accurate assessment of all students (as defined in the Federal notice) including students with disabilities, English learners, and low- and high-performing students.
3. Except as described above, a summative assessment that will be administered as a computer adaptive assessment and include a minimum of 1–2 performance assessments of modest scope.
4. Psychometrically sound scaling and equating procedures based on a combination of objectively scored items, constructed-response items, and a modest number of performance tasks of limited scope (e.g., no more than a few days to complete).
5. Reliable, valid, and fair scores for students and groups that can be used to evaluate student achievement and year-to-year growth; determine school/district/state effectiveness for Title I ESEA; and better understand the effectiveness and professional development needs of teachers and principals.
6. Achievement standards and achievement level descriptors that are internationally benchmarked.
7. Access for the State or its authorized delegate to a secure item and task bank that includes psychometric attributes required to score the assessment in a comparable manner with other State members, and access to other applications determined to be essential to the implementation of the system.
8. Online administration with limited support for paper-and-pencil administration through the end of the 2016–17 school year. States using the paper-and-pencil option will be responsible for any unique costs associated with the development and administration of the paper-and-pencil assessments.

9. Formative assessment tools and supports that are developed to support curricular goals, which include learning progressions, and that link evidence of student competencies to the summative system.
10. Professional development focused on curriculum and lesson development as well as scoring and examination of student work.
11. A representative governance structure that ensures a strong voice for State administrators, policymakers, school practitioners, and technical advisors to ensure an optimum balance of assessment quality, efficiency, costs, and time. The governance body will be responsible for implementing plans that are consistent with this MOU, but may make changes as necessary through a formal adoption process.
12. Through at least the 2013–14 school year, a Project Management Partner (PMP) that will manage the logistics and planning on behalf of the Consortium and that will monitor for the U.S. Department of Education the progress of deliverables of the proposal. The proposed PMP will be identified no later than August 4, 2010.
13. By September 1, 2014, a financial plan will be approved by the Governing States that will ensure the Consortium is efficient, effective, and sustainable. The plan will include as revenue at a minimum, State contributions, federal grants, and private donations and fees to non-State members as allowable by the U.S. Department of Education.
14. A consolidated data reporting system that enhances parent, student, teacher, principal, district, and State understanding of student progress toward college- and career-readiness.
15. Throughout the 2013–14 school year, access to an online test administration application, student constructed-response scoring application and secure test administration browsers that can be used by the Total State Membership to administer the assessment. The Consortium will procure resources necessary to develop and field test the system. However, States will be responsible for any hardware and vendor services necessary to implement the operational assessment. Based on a review of options and the finance plan, the Consortium may elect to jointly procure these services on behalf of the Total State Membership.

(d) Management of Consortium Funds

All financial activities will be governed by the laws and rules of the State of Washington, acting in the role of Lead Procurement State/Lead State, and in accordance with 34 CFR 80.36. Additionally, Washington is prepared to follow the guidelines for grant management associated with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), and will be legally responsible for the use of grant funds and for ensuring that the project is carried out by the Consortium in accordance with Federal requirements. Washington has already established an ARRA Quarterly reporting system (also referred to as *1512 Reporting*).

Per Washington statute, the basis of how funding management actually transpires is dictated by the method of grant dollar allocation, whether upfront distribution or pay-out linked to actual reimbursables. Washington functions under the latter format, generating claims against grant funds based on qualifying reimbursables submitted on behalf of staff or clients, physical purchases, or contracted services. Washington's role as Lead Procurement State/Lead State for the Consortium is not viewed any differently, as monetary exchanges will be executed against appropriate and qualifying reimbursables aligned to expenditure arrangements (i.e., contracts) made with vendors or contractors operating under "personal service contracts," whether individuals, private companies, government agencies, or educational institutions.

Washington, like most States, is audited regularly by the federal government for the accountability of federal grant funds, and has for the past five years been without an audit finding. Even with the additional potential for review and scrutiny associated with ARRA funding, Washington has its fiscal monitoring and control systems in place to manage the Consortium needs.

- As part of a comprehensive system of fiscal management, Washington's accounting practices are stipulated in the State Administrative and Accounting Manual (SAAM) managed by the State's Office of Financial Management. The SAAM provides details and administrative procedures required of all Washington State agencies for the procurement of goods and services. As such, the State's educational agency is required to follow the SAAM; actions taken to manage the fiscal activities of the Consortium will, likewise, adhere to policies and procedures outlined in the SAAM.
- For information on the associated contracting rules that Washington will adhere to while serving as fiscal agent on behalf of the Consortium, refer to the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 39.29 "Personal Service Contracts." Regulations and policies authorized by this RCW are established by the State's Office of Financial Management, and can be found in the SAAM.

(e) Governance Structure and Activities of States in the Consortium

As shown in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium governance structure, the Total State Membership of the Consortium includes Governing and Advisory States, with Washington serving in the role of Lead Procurement State/Lead State on behalf of the Consortium.

A **Governing State** is a State that:

- Has fully committed to this Consortium only and met the qualifications specified in this document,
- Is a member of only one Consortium applying for a grant in the Program,
- Has an active role in policy decision-making for the Consortium,
- Provides a representative to serve on the Steering Committee,
- Provides a representative(s) to serve on one or more Work Groups,
- Approves the Steering Committee Members and the Executive Committee Members,
- Participates in the final decision-making of the following:
 - Changes in Governance and other official documents,
 - Specific Design elements, and
 - Other issues that may arise.

An **Advisory State** is a State that:

- Has not fully committed to any Consortium but supports the work of this Consortium,
- Participates in all Consortium activities but does not have a vote unless the Steering Committee deems it beneficial to gather input on decisions or chooses to have the Total Membership vote on an issue,
- May contribute to policy, logistical, and implementation discussions that are necessary to fully operationalize the SMARTER Balanced Assessment System, and
- Is encouraged to participate in the Work Groups.

Organizational Structure

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is comprised of one representative from each Governing State in the Consortium. Committee members may be a chief or his/her designee. Steering Committee Members must meet the following criteria:

- Be from a Governing State,
- Have prior experience in either the design or implementation of curriculum and/or assessment systems at the policy or implementation level, and
- Must have willingness to serve as the liaison between the Total State Membership and Working Groups.

Steering Committee Responsibilities

- Determine the broad picture of what the assessment system will look like,

- Receive regular reports from the Project Management Partner, the Policy Coordinator, and the Content Advisor,
- Determine the issues to be presented to the Governing and/or Advisory States,
- Oversee the expenditure of funds in collaboration with the Lead Procurement State/Lead State,
- Operationalize the plan to transition from the proposal governance to implementation governance, and
- Evaluate and recommend successful contract proposals for approval by the Lead Procurement State/Lead State.

Executive Committee

- The Executive Committee is made up of the Co-Chairs of the Executive Committee, a representative from the Lead Procurement State/Lead State, a representative from higher education and one representative each from four Governing States. The four Governing State representatives will be selected by the Steering Committee. The Higher Education representative will be selected by the Higher Education Advisory Group, as defined in the Consortium Governance document.
- For the first year, the Steering Committee will vote on four representatives, one each from four Governing States. The two representatives with the most votes will serve for three years and the two representatives with the second highest votes will serve for two years. This process will allow for the rotation of two new representatives each year. If an individual is unable to complete the full term of office, then the above process will occur to choose an individual to serve for the remainder of the term of office.

Executive Committee Responsibilities

- Oversee development of SMARTER Balanced Comprehensive Assessment System,
- Provide oversight of the Project Management Partner,
- Provide oversight of the Policy Coordinator,
- Provide oversight of the Lead Procurement State/Lead State,
- Work with project staff to develop agendas,
- Resolve issues,
- Determine what issues/decisions are presented to the Steering Committee, Advisory and/or Governing States for decisions/votes,
- Oversee the expenditure of funds, in collaboration with the Lead Procurement State/Lead State, and
- Receive and act on special and regular reports from the Project Management Partner, the Policy Coordinator, the Content Advisor, and the Lead Procurement State/Lead State.

Executive Committee Co-Chairs

- Two Co-chairs will be selected from the Steering Committee States. The two Co-chairs must be from two different states. Co-chairs will work closely with the Project Management Partner. Steering Committee members wishing to serve as Executive Committee Co-chairs will submit in writing to the Project Management Partner their willingness to serve. They will need to provide a document signed by their State Chief indicating State support for this role. The Project Management Partner will then prepare a ballot of interested individuals. Each Steering Committee member will vote on the two individuals they wish to serve as Co-chair. The individual with the most votes will serve as the new Co-chair.
- Each Co-chair will serve for two years on a rotating basis. For the first year, the Steering committee will vote on two individuals and the one individual with the most votes will serve a three-year term and the individual with the second highest number of votes will serve a two-year term.
- If an individual is unable to complete the full term of office, then the above process will occur to choose an individual to serve for the remainder of the term of office.

Executive Committee Co-Chair Responsibilities

- Set the Steering Committee agendas,
- Set the Executive Committee agenda,
- Lead the Executive Committee meetings,
- Lead the Steering Committee meetings,
- Oversee the work of the Executive Committee,
- Oversee the work of the Steering Committee,
- Coordinate with the Project Management Partner,
- Coordinate with Content Advisor,
- Coordinate with Policy coordinator,
- Coordinate with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and
- Coordinate with Executive Committee to provide oversight to the Consortium.

Decision-making

Consensus will be the goal of all decisions. Major decisions that do not reach consensus will go to a simple majority vote. The Steering Committee will determine what issues will be referred to the Total State Membership. Each member of each group (Advisory/Governing States, Steering Committee, Executive Committee) will have one vote when votes are conducted within each group. If there is only a one to three vote difference, the issue will be re-examined to seek greater consensus. The Steering Committee will be responsible for preparing additional information as to the pros and cons of the issue to assist voting States in developing consensus and reaching a final decision. The Steering Committee may delegate this responsibility to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will decide which decisions or issues are votes to

be taken to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee makes the decision to take issues to the full Membership for a vote.

The Steering Committee and the Governance/Finance work group will collaborate with each Work Group to determine the hierarchy of the decision-making by each group in the organizational structure.

Work Groups

The Work Groups are comprised of chiefs, assessment directors, assessment staff, curriculum specialists, professional development specialists, technical advisors and other specialists as needed from States. Participation on a workgroup will require varying amounts of time depending on the task. Individuals interested in participating on a Work Group should submit their request in writing to the Project Management Partner indicating their preferred subgroup. All Governing States are asked to commit to one or more Work Groups based on skills, expertise, and interest within the State to maximize contributions and distribute expertise and responsibilities efficiently and effectively. The Consortium has established the following Work Groups:

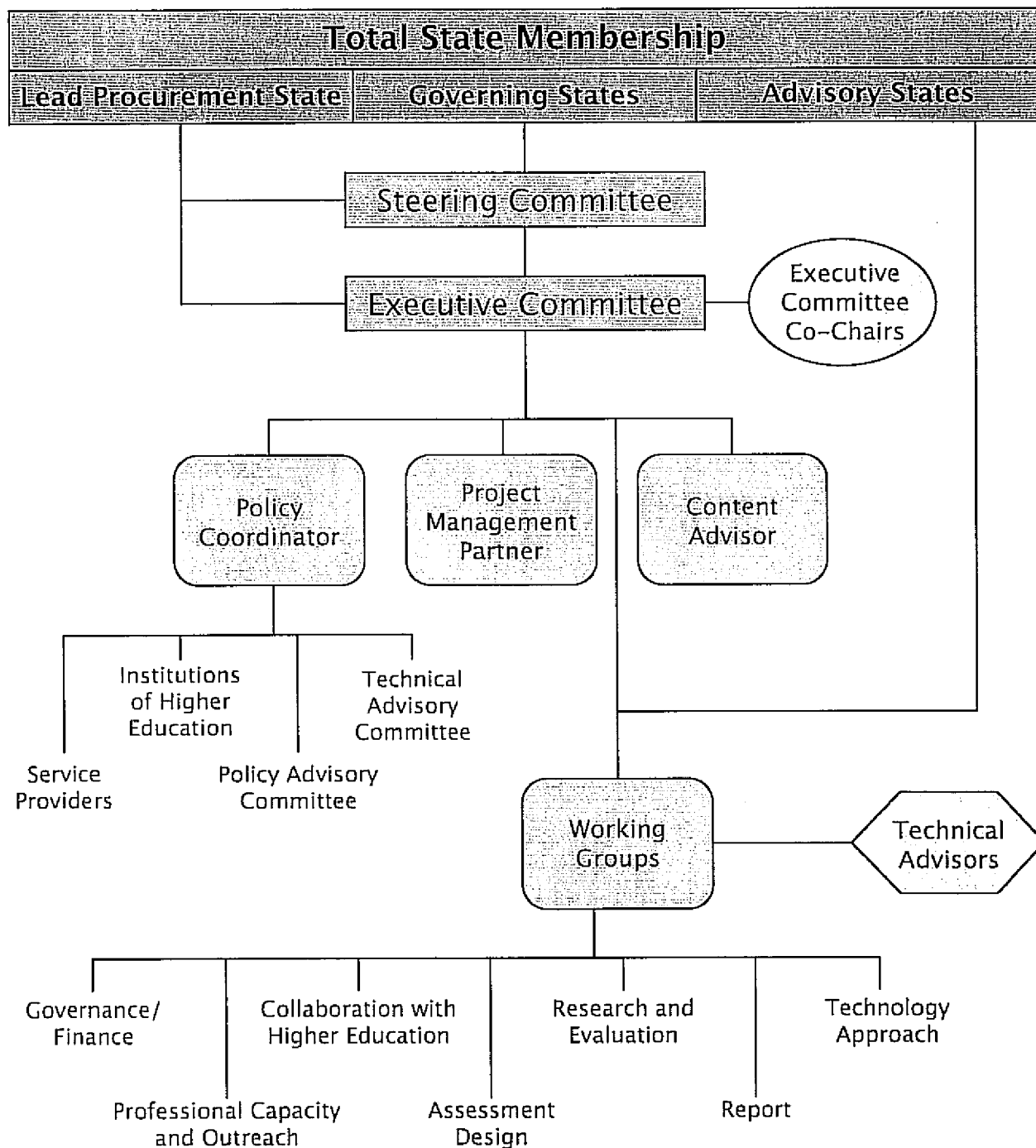
- Governance/Finance,
- Assessment Design,
- Research and Evaluation,
- Report,
- Technology Approach,
- Professional Capacity and Outreach, and
- Collaboration with Higher Education.

The Consortium will also support the work of the Work Groups through a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The Policy Coordinator in collaboration with the Steering Committee will create various groups as needed to advise the Steering Committee and the Total State Membership. Initial groups will include

- Institutions of Higher Education,
- Technical Advisory Committee,
- Policy Advisory Committee, and
- Service Providers.

An organizational chart showing the groups described above is provided on the next page.

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium Organizational Structure



(f) State Entrance, Exit, and Status Change

This MOU shall become effective as of the date first written above upon signature by both the Consortium and the Lead Procurement State/Lead State (Washington) and remain in force until the conclusion of the Program, unless terminated earlier in writing by the Consortium as set forth below.

Entrance into Consortium

Entrance into the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium is assured when:

- The level of membership is declared and signatures are secured on the MOU from the State's Commissioner, State Superintendent, or Chief; Governor; and President/Chair of the State Board of Education (if the State has one);
- The signed MOU is submitted to the Consortium Grant Project Manager (until June 23) and then the Project Management Partner after August 4, 2010;
- The Advisory and Governing States agree to and adhere to the requirements of the governance;
- The State's Chief Procurement Officer has reviewed its applicable procurement rules and provided assurance that it may participate in and make procurements through the Consortium;
- The State is committed to implement a plan to identify any existing barriers in State law, statute, regulation, or policy to implementing the proposed assessment system and to addressing any such barriers prior to full implementation of the summative assessment components of the system; and
- The State agrees to support all decisions made prior to the State joining the Consortium.

After receipt of the grant award, any request for entrance into the Consortium must be approved by the Executive Committee. Upon approval, the Project Management Partner will then submit a change of membership to the USED for approval. A State may begin participating in the decision-making process after receipt of the MOU.

Exit from Consortium

Any State may leave the Consortium without cause, but must comply with the following exit process:

- A State requesting an exit from the Consortium must submit in writing their request and reasons for the exit request,
- The written explanation must include the statutory or policy reasons for the exit,
- The written request must be submitted to the Project Management Partner with the same signatures as required for the MOU,
- The Executive Committee will act upon the request within a week of the request, and
- Upon approval of the request, the Project Management Partner will then submit a change of membership to the USED for approval.

Changing Roles in the Consortium

A State desiring to change from an Advisory State to a Governing State or from a Governing State to an Advisory State may do so under the following conditions:

- A State requesting a role change in the Consortium must submit in writing their request and reasons for the request,
- The written request must be submitted to the Project Management Partner with the same signatures as required for the MOU, and
- The Executive Committee will act upon the request within a week of the request and submit to the USED for approval.

Plan for Identifying Existing State Barriers

Each State agrees to identify existing barriers in State laws, statutes, regulations, or policies by noting the barrier and the plan to remove the barrier. Each State agrees to use the table below as a planning tool for identifying existing barriers. States may choose to include any known barriers in the table below at the time of signing this MOU.

Barrier	Issue/Risk of Issue (if known)	Statute, Regulation, or Policy	Governing Body with Authority to Remove Barrier	Approximate Date to Initiate Action	Target Date for Removal of Barrier	Comments
State budget may be cut	Risk	Statute	Legislation	January 2013		
State may create conflicting legislation with grant	Risk	Statute	Legislation	Unknown		
State advisory committees may recommend adoption of Common Core Standards with conflicting content	Risk	Policy	State Superintendent	March 2011	December 2011	
State may elect to withdraw to implement another consortium's RTTT assessment model	Risk	Policy	State Superintendent	June 2013	September 2013	State is currently enrolled in two RTTT consortia
State may elect to adopt certain assessment and accountability measures, including alternate assessment models, that may become permissible under forthcoming ESEA reauthorization	Issue	Policy	State Superintendent	Unknown	Unknown	

Plan for Identifying Existing State Barriers

Each State agrees to identify existing barriers in State laws, statutes, regulations, or policies by noting the barrier and the plan to remove the barrier. Each State agrees to use the table below as a planning tool for identifying existing barriers. States may choose to include any known barriers in the table below at the time of signing this MOU.

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State advisory committees may recommend adoption of Common Core Standards with conflicting content	Risk	Policy	State Superintendent	March 2011	December 2011	
State may elect to withdraw to implement another consortium's RTTT assessment model	Risk	Policy	State Superintendent	June 2013	September 2013	State is currently enrolled in two RTTT consortia
State may elect to adopt certain assessment and accountability measures, including alternate assessment models, that may become permissible under forthcoming ESEA reauthorization	Issue	Policy	State Superintendent	Unknown	Unknown	

- (h) Bind each State in the Consortium to every statement and assurance made in the application through the following signature blocks

(h)(i)(A) ADVISORY STATE SIGNATURE BLOCK for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application Assurances.

(Required from all "Advisory States" in the Consortium.)

As an Advisory State in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium, I have read and understand the roles and responsibilities of Advisory States, and agree to be bound by the statements and assurances made in the application.

State Name:
North Dakota

Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name):
John Hoeven, Governor

(b)(6)

Telephone:

701-328-2200

Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:

Date:

6-4-10

Chief State School Officer (Printed Name):
Wayne G. Sanstead, State Superintendent

Telephone:

701-328-4570

Signature of the Chief State School Officer:

Date:

6-02-10

(b)(6)

(h)(ii) STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICER SIGNATURE BLOCK for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application Assurances.

(Required from all States in the Consortium.)

I certify that I have reviewed the applicable procurement rules for my State and have determined that it may participate in and make procurements through the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium.

State Name:
North Dakota

State's chief procurement official (or designee), (Printed Name):

Angie Scherbenske, Procurement Officer

Telephone:

701-328-2779

Signature of State's chief procurement official (or designee),:

(b)(6)

Date:

6-3-10

Letter of Intent for Institutes of Higher Education

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium

**Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program: Comprehensive Assessment
Systems Grant Application**

CFDA Number: 84.395B

The purpose of this Letter of Intent is to

- (a) Detail the responsibilities of the IHE or IHE system,
- (b) Identify the total number of direct matriculation students in the partner IHE or IHE system in the 2008–2009 school year, and
- (c) Commit the State’s higher education executive officer (if the State has one) and the president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system through signature blocks.

(a) Detail the responsibilities of the IHE or IHE system

Each IHE or IHE system commits to the following agreements:

1. Participation with the Consortium in the design and development of the Consortium’s final high school summative assessments in mathematics and English language arts in order to ensure that the assessments measure college readiness; and
2. Implementation of policies, once the final high school summative assessments are implemented that exempt from remedial courses and place into credit-bearing college courses any student who meets the Consortium-adopted achievement standard (as defined in the NIA) for each assessment and any other placement requirement established by the IHE or IHE system.

(b) Total Number of Direct Matriculation Students (as defined in the NIA) in the Partner IHE or IHE system in the 2008–2009 School Year

Note: NIA defines direct matriculation student as a student who entered college as a freshman within two years of graduating from high school

State	Name of Participating IHEs	Number of Direct Matriculation Students in IHE in 2008-2009	Total Direct Matriculation Students in State in 2008-2009
North Dakota	Bismarck State College	308	5,889
	Dickinson State University	203	
	Lake Region State College	62	
	Mayville State University	86	
	Minot State University	319	
	Dakota College at Bottineau	59	
	North Dakota State College of Science	141	
	North Dakota State University	2525	
	University of North Dakota	1858	
	Valley City State University	123	
	Williston State College	119	
	Non-Tribal Colleges, Total	5803	
	Cankdeska Cikana Community	8	
	Fort Berthold Community College	64	
	Sitting Bull College	14	
	Tribal Colleges, Total	86	

(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

IHE or IHE system SIGNATURE BLOCK for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program
Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application.

Each IHE or IHE system commits to the following agreements:

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State Name:

North Dakota

State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name): William Goetz, Chancellor
North Dakota University System

Telephone:

701-328-2960

Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one:

(b)(6)

Date:

6/9/10

President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name): Bismarck State College

LARRY C. STOFSEN, President

Telephone:

701.224.5430

Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system:

(b)(6)

Date:

2 June 2010

(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

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State Name:

North Dakota

State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name): William Goetz, Chancellor
North Dakota University System

Telephone:

701-328-2960

Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one:

(b)(6)

Date:

6/9/10

President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name):

Richard J. McCallum

Telephone:

701
483-2326

Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system:

(b)(6)

Date:

6-01-2010

Dickinson State University

(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

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State Name:

North Dakota

State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name): William Goetz, Chancellor
North Dakota University System

Telephone:

701-328-2960

Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one:

Date:

(b)(6)

6/9/10

President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name): Mike Bower, Ph.D.

Telephone:

701-662-1544

Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system:

Date:

(b)(6)

6-27-10

Lake Region State College, Devils Lake

(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

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State Name:

North Dakota

State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name): William Goetz, Chancellor
North Dakota University System

Telephone:

701-328-2960

Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one:

(b)(6)

Date:

6/9/10

President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name):

Gary Hagen

Telephone:

701-788-4753

Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system:

(b)(6)

Date:

6-2-10

Mayville State University

(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

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State Name:

North Dakota

State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name): William Goetz, Chancellor
North Dakota University System

Telephone:

701-328-2960

Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one:

(b)(6)

Date:

6/9/10

President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name):

David G. Fuller

Telephone:

701-858-3300

Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system:

Minot State University

(b)(6)

Date:

May 27, 2010

(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

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State Name:

North Dakota

State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name): William Goetz, Chancellor
North Dakota University System

Telephone:

701-328-2960

Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one: (b)(6)

Date:

6/9/10

President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name):

John Richman

Telephone:

701 671 2221

Signature of President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system: (b)(6)

Date:

6-2-10

ND State College of Science, Wahpeton

(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

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State Name:

North Dakota

State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name): William Goetz, Chancellor
North Dakota University System

Telephone:

701-328-2960

Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one:

Date:

(b)(6)

6/8/10

INTERIM President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name): **North Dakota State University**

Telephone:

(b)(6)

Richard Hanson

701-231-7211

Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system:

Date:

6/1/2010

(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

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State Name:

North Dakota

State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name): William Goetz, Chancellor
North Dakota University System

Telephone:

701-328-2960

Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one:

(b)(6)

Date:

6/9/00

President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name):

Telephone:

Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system:

(b)(6)

Date:

5/28/10

University of North Dakota, Grand Forks

(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

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State Name: <i>NORTH DAKOTA</i>	
State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name): <i>WILLIAM GOETZ</i>	Telephone: 701-328-2960
Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one: (b)(6)	Date: <i>6/9/10</i>
<u>President</u> or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name): <i>STEVEN W. SHERLEY</i>	Telephone: <i>701-845-7102</i>
Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system: <i>Valley City State University</i> (b)(6)	Date: <i>6-2-10</i>

(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

IHE or IHE system SIGNATURE BLOCK for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application.

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State Name:

North Dakota

State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name): William Goetz, Chancellor
North Dakota University System

Telephone:

701-328-2960

Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one:
(b)(6)

Date:

6/9/10

President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name):

Telephone:

Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system:
Williston State College

Date:

6/1/10

(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

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State Name:

North Dakota

State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name): William Goetz, Chancellor
North Dakota University System

Telephone:

701-328-2960

Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one:

(b)(6)

Date:

6/9/10

President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name):

Ken Corosz

Telephone:

701-228-5480

Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system:
Dakota College at Bottineau

(b)(6)

Date:

6-2-10

Attachment 6

State's Race to the Top Assessment Memorandum of Understanding (MOU),
if applicable

Refer to combined MOU documentation within Attachment 5

Attachment 8

A copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2011-2012 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the “all students” group and all subgroups (if applicable)

2010-11 State Profile Reports

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction compiles annual state, district, and school profile reports that present summative and disaggregated student achievement data that meet fully the reporting specifications of the state’s accountability workbook. The following web address presents the 2010-11 school year state-level profile report, which includes the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2010-11 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the “all students” group and all subgroups. The 2011-12 profile reports will be posted in late August 2012.

<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/dpi/reports/Profile/1011/ProfileDistrict/99999.pdf>.

2011-12 State Achievement Results Summary

The following page provides a high-level summary report of the 2011-12 statewide achievement level results. The 2011-12 state profile reports will be posted in late August 2012.

Report: North Dakota Assessment – State, 2011-12
State of North Dakota

Reading Achievement Rates (Across All Grades)							
Group	Total Number of Students	Achievement Levels				Combined Levels	
		Novice	Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced	Not Proficient	Proficient
All	49803	7.32%	18.57%	56.41%	17.70%	25.89%	74.11%
Male	25409	8.76%	20.56%	55.63%	15.04%	29.33%	70.67%
Female	24173	5.73%	16.41%	57.33%	20.53%	22.14%	77.86%
White	41690	5.25%	16.77%	58.65%	19.33%	22.02%	77.98%
Native American	4819	20.59%	30.73%	42.50%	6.18%	51.32%	48.68%
Black	1347	17.59%	24.13%	47.29%	10.99%	41.72%	58.28%
Hispanic	1269	12.61%	25.93%	50.04%	11.43%	38.53%	61.47%
Asian American	678	10.18%	17.85%	47.64%	24.34%	28.02%	71.98%
Limited English Proficient (LEP)	2062	30.70%	31.96%	32.59%	4.75%	62.66%	37.34%
Non LEP	47741	6.31%	17.99%	57.44%	18.26%	24.30%	75.70%
Low Income	17479	12.73%	24.27%	51.84%	11.16%	37.00%	63.00%
Non Low Income	32324	4.39%	15.48%	58.89%	21.24%	19.88%	80.12%
Students with disabilities (IEP)	6422	15.82%	28.14%	47.29%	8.75%	43.96%	56.04%
Non IEP	43381	6.06%	17.15%	57.76%	19.02%	23.21%	76.79%
Migrant	77	23.38%	23.38%	41.56%	11.69%	46.75%	53.25%
Non Migrant	49726	7.29%	18.56%	56.44%	17.71%	25.86%	74.14%

Math Achievement Rates (Across All Grades)							
Group	Total Number of Students	Achievement Levels				Combined Levels	
		Novice	Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced	Not Proficient	Proficient
All	49870	6.05%	16.78%	50.37%	26.79%	22.84%	77.16%
Male	25439	6.09%	16.18%	50.16%	27.56%	22.28%	77.72%
Female	24208	5.92%	17.35%	50.69%	26.05%	23.26%	76.74%
White	41702	3.93%	15.07%	51.50%	29.51%	19.00%	81.00%
Native American	4809	19.48%	28.36%	43.02%	9.13%	47.85%	52.15%
Black	1361	17.63%	22.78%	46.14%	13.45%	40.41%	59.59%
Hispanic	1270	9.69%	24.41%	51.02%	14.88%	34.09%	65.91%
Asian American	728	11.13%	14.01%	41.35%	33.52%	25.14%	74.86%
Limited English Proficient (LEP)	2137	27.00%	27.94%	37.20%	7.86%	54.94%	45.06%
Non LEP	47733	5.12%	16.28%	50.96%	27.64%	21.40%	78.60%
Low Income	17548	11.31%	22.22%	49.93%	16.54%	33.53%	66.47%

Non Low Income	32322	3.20%	13.83%	50.61%	32.35%	17.03%	82.97%
Students with disabilities (IEP)	6437	15.08%	27.00%	45.94%	11.98%	42.08%	57.92%
Non IEP	43433	4.72%	15.27%	51.03%	28.98%	19.98%	80.02%
Migrant	75	10.67%	30.67%	40.00%	18.67%	41.33%	58.67%
Non Migrant	49795	6.05%	16.76%	50.39%	26.80%	22.81%	77.19%

TABLE 2: REWARD, PRIORITY, AND FOCUS SCHOOLS

Provide the SEA's list of reward, priority, and focus schools using the Table 2 template. Use the key to indicate the criteria used to identify a school as a reward, priority, or focus school.

TABLE 2: REWARD, PRIORITY, AND FOCUS SCHOOLS

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES ID #	REWARD SCHOOL	PRIORITY SCHOOL	FOCUS SCHOOL
Belcourt	Turtle Mt Community High School	3802530-00752		✓	
Dunseith	Dunseith High School	3805460-00155		✓	
Ft Totten	Four Winds Community High School	3807170-00227		✓	
Ft Yates	Ft Yates Middle School	3807200-00744		✓	
Ft Yates	Standing Rock Community Grant High School	3807200-		✓	
Mandaree	Mandaree High School	3811850-00006		✓	
Mandaree	Mandaree Elem School	3811850-00747		✓	
Minnewaukan	Minnewaukan High School	3812990-00431		✓	
Oberon	Oberon Elem School	3814520- 00515		✓	
Solen	Cannon Ball Elem School	3816980-00585		✓	
Solen	Solen High School	3816980-00587		✓	
Warwick	Warwick Elem School	3819260-00671		✓	
Warwick	Warwick High School	3819260-00672		✓	
White Shield	White Shield High School	3819680- 00808		✓	
White Shield	White Shield Elem School	3819680-00807		✓	
Bismarck	Will-Moore Elem School	3800014-00062			✓
Bismarck	Pioneer Elem School	3800014-00054			✓
Bismarck	Simle Middle School	3800014-00060			✓
Bismarck	Wachter Middle School	3800014-00061			✓
Bottineau	Bottineau Jr-Sr High School	3803060-00068			✓
Bowman Co	Bowman Co Elem School	3803200-00074			✓

Burke Central	Burke Central Elem School	3803590-00080			✓
Enderlin	Enderlin Area High School	3800061-00184			✓
Fargo	Jefferson Elem School	3806780-00199			✓
Fargo	Roosevelt Elem School	3806780-00207			✓
Fargo	Lewis and Clark Elem School	3806780-00200			✓
Fargo	Washington Elem School	3806780-00210			✓
Grand Forks	Ben Franklin Elem School	3808130-00252			✓
Grand Forks	Valley Middle School	3808130-00265			✓
Grand Forks	Century Elem School	3808130-00259			✓
Hillsboro	Hillsboro Elem School	3809570-00301			✓
Langdon	Langdon Area High School	3810810-00348			✓
Midway	Midway Elem School	3812920-00424			✓
Milnor	Milnor Elem School	3812930-00426			✓
Minot	Memorial Middle School	3813030-00444			✓
Minot	Sunnyside Elem School	3813030-00449			✓
Mohall-Lansford-Sherwood	MLS-Mohall Elem School	3800050-00579			✓
Mott-Regent	Mott-Regent Elem School	3800046-00460			✓
Nedrose	Nedrose Elem School	3813660-00474			✓
North Star	North Star Elem School	3800390-00453			✓
Turtle Lake-Mercer	Turtle Lake-Mercer Elem School	3818500-00640			✓
Underwood	Underwood High School	3818660-00645			✓
Valley City	Valley City Jr-Sr High School	3818850-00656			✓
Velva	Velva Elem School	3817040-00590			✓
West Fargo	Eastwood Elem School	3819410-00677			✓
West Fargo	South Elem School	3819410-00682			✓
Bismarck	Dorothy Moses Elem School	3800014-00048	✓		
Bismarck	Riverside Elem School	3800014-00057	✓		
Devils Lake	Sweetwater Elem School	3805040-00130	✓		

Fargo	Madison Elem School	3806780-00203	✓		
Kenmare	Kenmare Elem School	3810180-00731	✓		
Maple Valley	West Elem School	3812020-00396	✓		
McClusky	McClusky Elem School	3812430-00407	✓		
North Border	North Border-Neché Elem School	3800054-00472	✓		
Park River	Park River Elem School	3814880-00145	✓		
South Prairie	South Prairie Elem School	3817170-00594	✓		
Thompson	Thompson Elem School	3818280-00629	✓		
Underwood	Underwood Elem School	3818660-00644	✓		
United	Burlington-Des Lacs Elem School	3818730-00646	✓		
Valley City	Jefferson Elem School	3818850-00654	✓		
Wolford	Wolford Elem School	3820230-00708	✓		
Wyndmere	Wyndmere Elem School	3820310-00712	✓		
TOTAL # of Schools: 62					

Total # of Title I schools in the State: 307

Total # of Title I-participating high schools in the State with graduation rates less than 60%: _____

Key	
<u>Reward School Criteria:</u> A. Highest-performing school B. High-progress school <u>Priority School Criteria:</u> C. Among the lowest five percent of Title I schools in the State based on the proficiency and lack of progress of the “all students” group D-1. Title I-participating high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years D-2. Title I-eligible high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years E. Tier I or Tier II SIG school implementing a school intervention model	<u>Focus School Criteria:</u> F. Has the largest within-school gaps between the highest-achieving subgroup(s) and the lowest-achieving subgroup(s) or, at the high school level, has the largest within-school gaps in the graduation rate G. Has a subgroup or subgroups with low achievement or, at the high school level, a low graduation rate H. A Title I-participating high school with graduation rate less than 60% over a number of years that is not identified as a priority school

Attachment 10

A copy of the guidelines that the SEA has developed and adopted for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems (if applicable).

A. North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines

B. North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines

North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines

September 5, 2012

**Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead, State Superintendent
North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
600 East Boulevard Avenue, Department 201
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0440
www.dpi.state.nd.us**

North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines

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North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines

Preface: A Statement of State Policy

It is the expressed constitutional and statutory responsibility of the State Superintendent and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) to supervise the provision of elementary and secondary education to all students within North Dakota. These duties include the supervision of the establishment and maintenance of schools and the provision of advice and counsel regarding the welfare of all schools and the advancement of statewide efforts to improve the provision of education to all students statewide.

It is also the expressed responsibility of the State of North Dakota, as specified within state and federal statutes, including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, to ensure that all students are provided high-quality instruction based on challenging state content and achievement standards and that this instruction is provided by highly qualified and effective teachers. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the state to report to the public, in a valid and reliable manner, student achievement outcomes and the status of the state's corps of highly qualified teachers.

A Focus on Teacher Effectiveness

The State of North Dakota ensures that every teacher is highly qualified through the state's teacher licensure provisions and the appropriate course assignment of teachers. The state ensures that every teacher is effective, in part, through the state's teacher performance evaluation statutes and the continual professional development of all teachers. North Dakota Century Code (15.1-15) specifies that every public school district shall conduct an appropriate form and frequency of written teacher evaluations for each public school teacher, based in part on the standing tenure and experience of each teacher. During each of the first three years of employment, a school district will conduct two annual teacher performance evaluations, the first by December 15 and the second by March 15 of each respective year. Subsequently, every teacher will receive an annual performance evaluation by March 15 of each year. Teacher performance evaluations provide for the continual improvement of a teacher's instruction and overall performance and may be used to inform personnel decisions.

It has been the historical practice among North Dakota public schools to adopt and administer locally defined teacher performance evaluation efforts. This locally determined practice has produced a wide variety of teacher performance evaluations, which represent various reference standards, recording metrics, and narrative formats. The variety of evaluation models has not allowed for a common means of uniformly recording or compiling teacher evaluation results in terms of common professional standards or teacher evaluation performance levels. This has restricted internal district quality assurance and external compliance monitoring efforts.

It has been the standing practice of the NDDPI to advance meaningful educational policies and practices based on broad, statewide dialogue among the state's various educational stakeholders and policymakers. Within this advisory function, the NDDPI has actively sought the meaningful engagement of the state's various stakeholders to study, among other school improvement issues, the need for the state to adopt more uniform standards and guidelines to aid local school districts in the conduct of teacher performance evaluations. To advance a collaborative response to this and other education improvement issues, the NDDPI established the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee, which consisted of approximately twenty-five separate stakeholder organizations.

During its deliberations, the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee formed a separate Subcommittee, titled the Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support System Subcommittee (TPESS Subcommittee), to develop and propose for state adoption more uniform teacher performance evaluation guidelines. The TPESS Subcommittee's membership consisted of six teachers, six administrators, and four at-large members, including two legislators, a representative from the ND LEAD Center for Educational Leadership, and a higher education representative. The TPESS Subcommittee studied

national- and state-focused research, reviewed emerging teacher evaluation models from other states, and sought direct technical assistance from the North Central Comprehensive Center at Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. The NDDPI facilitated and provided direct assistance to the effort.

The TPESS Subcommittee conducted its study and drafting work from October 2011 through July 2012. The *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* constitute the product of that effort.

Following the completion of its work, the TPESS Subcommittee forwarded these teacher performance evaluation guidelines to the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee, which subsequently reviewed, amended, and ultimately recommended these guidelines for adoption to the State Superintendent.

Our Commitment to our Shared Profession

North Dakotans understand the clear link between a highly effective teacher and a student's academic growth and achievement. As a state, we believe that we build the capacity of our teachers as a primary way to improve instruction and student achievement. A credible teacher evaluation system will foster continuous improvement among all teachers and thereby honor and deepen the professional standing of teaching.

I am pleased by the collaborative effort that has generated this meaningful set of teacher performance evaluation guidelines. These guidelines will aid local school districts in their efforts to improve the quality, uniformity, validity, and reliability of their unique local teacher evaluation models. Each local school district retains its independence to select or adopt their own unique evaluation model, which will now be aligned to the current, nationally respected core teacher standards. I am confident that the collaborative effort that has defined these standards and developed these guidelines will carry through to the eventual administration of individual teacher evaluations that are deeply meaningful to the improvement of instruction and the advancement of each teacher's career.

I wish to extend my personal gratitude to the members of the TPESS Subcommittee and the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee for their diligence, dedication, and professional attention to the study of research-based practice and policy in the development of these guidelines. I now ask that each public school district, administrator, and teacher take these guidelines to heart with the commitment to improve our profession and our individual efforts to raise the quality of education across our state.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wayne G. Sanstead". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Wayne. G. Sanstead
State Superintendent

North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines

Introduction

This document, titled the *North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines* (hereafter, *Guidelines*) presents overall guidance to local school districts regarding the state's adoption of a uniform, statewide teacher performance evaluation system. The provisions of the statewide teacher evaluation system become effective with the 2012-13 school year, when local school districts begin to plan a series of phased-in development and implementation activities, as presented within the *Guidelines*. The schedule for developing and implementing a statewide teacher evaluation system is specified in Section I.

The *Guidelines* present information important for the adoption and implementation of a district-level teacher evaluation system. Sections I-VII of the *Guidelines* present information critical to adopting or developing a uniform statewide system that encourages local expression and flexibility. This information includes the following:

- The defining features of a meaningful teacher performance evaluation system;
- The foundational teacher professional standards that provide the core criteria for a teacher performance evaluation system;
- The means of adopting or developing valid local teacher evaluation models that are aligned to the state's teacher professional standards;
- The differentiated levels that define teacher professional performance;
- Reliable means of recording and compiling differentiated teacher performance;
- General administrative practices to efficiently conduct a district-level evaluation system; and
- Longer-term evaluation and research efforts to measure the performance of a district's or the state's evaluation system.

Appendix A to these guidelines lists some of the salient research documents that were used by the TPESS Subcommittee in the development of the guideline's provisions. The TPESS Subcommittee sought to incorporate meaningful, evidenced-based practices into the design and flexibility of these guidelines and the state's overall approach to teacher performance evaluation. As the state matures in the adoption and implementation of its emerging statewide teacher evaluation system, characterized by local evaluation models, the NDDPI will reference appropriately reviewed research and the experience of local school districts to guide future program improvements.

Processes for evaluating teacher and school leader performance in K-12 education have received heightened attention in recent years, with policymakers and practitioners focusing efforts on improving teaching and learning through comprehensive evaluation and support systems. Most recently, the U.S. Department of Education, as a part of its *Race to the Top* and *ESEA Flexibility Waiver* programs, underscored teacher effectiveness that emphasized uniform, rigorous, and transparent evaluation systems for teachers and principals.

The *Guidelines* present a road map to guide local school districts in the design and implementation of their own unique evaluation systems. These systems, bound together through

commonly recognized professional teaching standards, differentiated performance levels, and general administration protocols, provide for a flexible yet integrated statewide evaluation system.

I. Defining a Meaningful Teacher Performance Evaluation System

It is the expressed intent of the NDDPI that the *Guidelines* provide local school districts with sufficient guidance to develop, adopt, and implement teacher evaluation systems that:

- Will be used for continual improvement of instruction;
- Meaningfully differentiate performance using at least four performance levels;
- Use multiple valid measures in determining teacher performance levels, including as a significant factor student growth data for all students. Consideration should be given to tested and non-tested subjects and grades. Additional consideration should be given to measures of professional practice, which may be gathered through multiple formats and sources, such as observations based on rigorous teacher performance standards, teacher portfolios, and student and parent surveys;
- Evaluate teachers on a regular basis, as provided in state law;
- Provide clear, timely, and useful feedback, including feedback that identifies needs and guides professional development; and
- Will be used to inform personnel decisions.

A meaningful state evaluation system will provide for foundational standards upon which all teachers should be evaluated, regardless of their content or service specialization. These standards identify those fundamental professional competencies that are required of all teachers. These standards allow for and accommodate the unique duties and responsibilities of each individual teacher. Section II of the *Guidelines* presents an overview of the state's teacher evaluation standards.

A meaningful state evaluation system will define a means for local school districts to adopt existing or to develop locally-designed teacher evaluation models, which are uniformly aligned to the state's teacher professional standards. These *Guidelines* assist local school districts in specifying their self-selected models and how these models meet standard program requirements. These *Guidelines* specify at least four differentiated performance levels to record the summative rating of each teacher. Districts may adopt various methods of determining teacher performance ratings. Local school districts are encouraged to use multiple measures that will constitute evidence of teachers' effectiveness in impacting actual student growth. Teacher evaluation ratings should allow for aggregated recording within the school and school district for internal quality assurance and external monitoring purposes. These *Guidelines* invite local school districts to exercise broad administrative discretion in the conduct of their evaluation system. These *Guidelines* present a means for local school districts to define and manage an efficient teacher evaluation system. Sections III through V of the *Guidelines* presents an overview of these various evaluation model design options and considerations.

Ultimately, a meaningful state evaluation system will ensure that local school districts can provide high-quality, uniform, valid, and reliable measures that will result in appropriate teacher professional improvement plans. The ultimate aim of any teacher evaluation system is to advance continual improvement of high-quality instruction that will lead to improved student outcomes and that will advance the professional competencies of each and every teacher.

Sections VI and VII advance a research-based manner of maintaining a quality teacher evaluation system.

A Timeline for the Implementation of a Statewide Teacher Evaluation System

It is the expressed intent of the State Superintendent that the development and dissemination of these *Guidelines* allow local school districts statewide to begin the process of revising their current teacher evaluation procedures to meet the specifications of the *Guidelines*. A timeline has been adopted that will provide local school districts with sufficient time to study the *Guidelines*, to establish a transitional strategy and timeline for the revision of their local teacher evaluation system, to pilot and eventually implement the provisions of their system, and to communicate with and train principals, teachers, and other stakeholders regarding the purpose, goals, changes, and future direction of the district's evaluation system.

To advance the state's and local school districts' work, the NDDPI has established the following administrative timeline:

- *2011-12 School Year: State Teacher Evaluation Guidelines Developed.* The NDDPI develops and adopts, with the consultation of statewide stakeholders, state teacher professional standards and teacher evaluation guidelines to be reviewed and approved by the State Superintendent.
- *Fall 2012: State Guidelines Approved.* The State Superintendent approves and adopts state teacher professional standards and the teacher evaluation guidelines for statewide dissemination. Additional support resource guidance, including teacher evaluation rubrics and linkage supports for student growth and achievement, will be developed during the 2012-13 academic year, which will become integral support resources to the guidelines.
- *2012-13 School Year. Statewide and District-Level Awareness Training and System Support Guidance Developed.* During 2012-13 the following activities will occur:
 1. The NDDPI disseminates to local school districts the state's approved teacher professional standards and teacher evaluation guidelines.
 2. The NDDPI, in collaboration with selective statewide education stakeholder organizations, conducts a series of regional training sessions that are designed to introduce educators and the public to the *Guidelines*.
 3. Local school districts begin to study the *Guidelines* and build district-wide capacity in anticipation of forthcoming development and implementation activities.
 4. The NDDPI will develop research-based guidance to aid local school districts to incorporate student growth and achievement data as a significant factor in the evaluation of teachers. This support guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

5. The NDDPI will develop rubrics to aid in the evaluation of quality teacher evaluation models. These rubrics will (a) support local school districts in the selection or development of local teacher evaluation models and (b) guide the NDDPI in evaluating and monitoring the quality of submitted local school district evaluation models. These rubrics and supporting guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.
 6. The NDDPI will begin the ongoing compilation of national and local teacher evaluation models that have been reviewed and approved by the NDDPI based on the state's quality evaluation rubrics. The process of reviewing and approving quality teacher evaluation models will be conducted by NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide advisory committee of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.
 7. The NDDPI will develop an online application to process the submission of local school district teacher evaluation models. All submitted models will undergo a formal review based on established quality evaluation rubrics against the *Guidelines*.
- *2013-14 School Year: School District Planning and Early-Adopter Pilot Efforts.* During 2013-14 the following activities will occur:
 1. Local school districts begin the process of planning to adopt and/or develop their own teacher evaluation models.
 2. The NDDPI solicits interested local school districts to volunteer to be early-adopter pilot sites to begin the process of adopting existing or developing locally-designed teacher evaluation models which align to the *Guidelines*.
 3. Early-adopter school districts begin their pilot efforts and provide recommendations to the NDDPI for possible incorporation into future guidance to local school districts.
 4. All local school districts voluntarily incorporate measures of valid and reliable student growth and achievement, as defined by the student growth guidance developed in 2012-13, as a significant factor within the evaluation of teachers.
 - *2014-15 School Year: Statewide School District Development and Phased-In Efforts.* During 2014-15 the following activities occur:
 1. With guidance provided by the NDDPI based on feedback from early-adopter pilot sites, local school districts statewide begin the process of adopting existing or developing locally-designed teacher evaluation models which align to the *Guidelines*. All local school districts establish a plan for the complete implementation of the teacher evaluation system by the 2015-16 school year. This plan will include the means of selecting an existing model or developing a local model, the training of administrative and supervisory staff and teachers, the district's communications plan, and the local school district's efforts to record and compile appropriate teacher

ratings for internal quality assurance and external monitoring purposes. Local school districts proceed to phase in all or elements of their teacher evaluation models.

2. The NDDPI will begin the process of reviewing local teacher evaluation models against the state's quality evaluation rubrics developed in 2012-13. Local school district teacher evaluation models, which demonstrate fidelity to the *Guidelines* based on the state's quality evaluation rubrics, will be approved. Teacher evaluation models which demonstrate deficiencies in their adherence to the *Guidelines* will be returned for additional improvement. The NDDPI will provide direct technical assistance to local school districts whose evaluation models demonstrate deficiencies.
 3. The NDDPI will convene a statewide peer review committee to conduct a high-level review of approved local teacher evaluation models to compile best-practice designs and administrative practices. This compilation of exemplary practices will be incorporated into future statewide guidance for the purposes of highlighting those models and practices worthy of replication. This quality assurance review will be conducted by NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide peer review committee of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.
- *2015-16 School Year: Full Implementation.* During 2015-16 the following activities will occur:
 1. All local school districts begin full implementation of their local teacher evaluation models.
 2. Local school districts begin the process of collecting and compiling local teacher evaluation rating data for local improvement efforts.
 - *2016-17 School Year. Full Implementation and State Monitoring Efforts.* The NDDPI begins the process of monitoring local school districts' teacher evaluation models to ensure compliance with the *Guidelines*, including referencing locally collected and secured aggregate teacher evaluation rating data. Data are collected and maintained by the local school and school district.

II. The Foundation of a Statewide Teacher Evaluation System: Uniform Teacher Professional Standards

In April 2011, the Council of Chief State School Officers, in collaboration with approximately twenty national professional education associations which constituted the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC), updated and released the national *InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards*. These InTASC standards articulated the common principles and foundations of teaching practice that cut across all subject areas and grade levels and that are necessary to improve student achievement. In effect, these InTASC standards define what teachers should know and be able to do to ensure every K-12 student reaches the goal of being ready to enter college or the workforce. These standards present the broad scope and competencies that define the teaching profession and, as such, constitute an appropriate foundation for the conduct and evaluation of teaching.

The InTASC standards (refer to the following website, http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2011/InTASC_Model_Core_Teaching_Standards_2011.pdf) identify ten professional teaching standards that are grouped among four general categories. The standards include:

- A. The Learner and Learning
 - Standard 1: Learner Development
 - Standard 2: Learning Differences
 - Standard 3: Learning Environments
- B. Content Knowledge
 - Standard 4: Content Knowledge
 - Standard 5: Application of Content
- C. Instructional Practice
 - Standard 6: Assessment
 - Standard 7: Planning for Instruction
 - Standard 8: Instructional Strategies
- D. Professional Responsibility
 - Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice
 - Standard 10: Leadership and Collaboration

These four general categories and their constituent standards provide a schema for the valid evaluation of any teacher's core competencies and the reliable means of recording and compiling overall teacher performance.

At the recommendation of the TPESS Subcommittee and the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee, the State Superintendent has adopted the *Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Model Core Teaching Standards (2011)* as the operative standards upon which the statewide teacher performance evaluation system is to be based. The adoption of these InTASC standards is effective with the approval of the *Guidelines*.

It is the expressed standing of the TPESS Subcommittee, the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee, and the State Superintendent that the InTASC standards represent and explicitly present foundational professional principles upon which student growth and academic achievement are grounded. The InTASC standards by design and through practice provide the greatest assurance that students will be taught to the highest academic content and achievement standards. The InTASC standards articulate and foster the actualization of sound professional and instructional practices. Each of the specified ten standards begins with, are directed toward, and find resolution in the continuous improvement of teachers. This growth in teacher professional practice results in meaningful instruction that produces actual, meaningful student growth and academic achievement.

It is the expressed standing of the State of North Dakota that the state's teacher evaluation system is designed to foster continuous improvement for all teachers that results in student growth. The state's teacher evaluation system is valid by the nature of its direct linkage to the InTASC standards. This linkage ensures that *all* teachers, including teachers working with special populations of students such as students with disabilities and English learners, will be

evaluated on uniform, professionally sound principles of a student achievement-centered educational system.

The state's teacher evaluation system is reliable by the nature of its uniform application to *all* teachers, based upon consistently applied procedures and measures, regardless of school organization, grade or subject assignment, standardized assessment applicability or non-applicability, general or specialized instructional assignment, geographical location, predominant student demographic setting, or other unique community or educational standing. Any reliable teacher evaluation system will provide for the comparable evaluation of all teachers based on a common, rigorous, academically-centered set of professional standards.

It is the expressed standing of the State of North Dakota that the quality, uniformity, validity, and reliability of the state's teacher evaluation system rests upon the foundational student-centered principles of the InTASC standards. ***The state stipulates that this student-centered focus provides assurances that any and all aspects of teacher evaluations conducted within the provisions of the Guidelines will incorporate student growth and achievement at a significant level for all teachers.*** As an additional measure of increased reliability, the state includes various multiple measures of teacher performance in the consideration of a teacher's effectiveness, including significant consideration for the state's standardized assessments and other objective measures, where appropriate by grade and subject matter.

Local school districts will use the InTASC standards as the criteria for the administration of their local teacher evaluation system. Local school districts may append additional standards to the InTASC standards for the purposes of designing their local systems; however, local school districts must minimally account for each teacher's overall performance in terms of the InTASC standards for local school recording and quality assurance purposes.

Though all school districts shall evaluate teachers against the four InTASC general categories, local school districts may voluntarily elect to evaluate teachers against each of the ten separate InTASC standards. In cases where a local school district chooses to evaluate teachers against all ten InTASC standards, any aggregate recording must minimally occur within the four general categories for quality assurance and compliance monitoring purposes.

The *Guidelines* do allow districts to purchase or adopt existing teacher evaluation models, provided that these models have been properly aligned to the InTASC standards and can produce meaningful ratings that can be transformed into the four specified general categories for district internal quality assurance and external compliance monitoring. The NDDPI will allow, receive, and accommodate proposals from local school districts that provide a means for this internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring to occur.

The NDDPI will monitor progress and support local school districts throughout the development, scaling up, and full implementation phases of their teacher evaluation systems to ensure that districts provide for valid and reliable teacher evaluation models.

III. The Form of a District Teacher Evaluation System: Adopting a Valid Evaluation Model Aligned to InTASC Standards

Effective no later than the 2014-15 school year and supported by guidance provided by the NDDPI based on feedback from early-adopter pilot sites, local school districts statewide must begin the process of adopting existing or developing locally-designed teacher evaluation models

which align to the state's specified guidelines. By April 15, 2015, all local school districts shall establish and submit to the NDDPI a plan for the complete implementation of the district's teacher evaluation system during the 2015-16 school year. This plan will include the means of selecting an existing model or developing a local model, the training of administrative and supervisory staff and teachers, the district's communications plan, and the local school district's efforts to record and compile appropriate teacher ratings for internal quality assurance and external monitoring purposes.

A local school district shall adopt or develop a teacher evaluation system plan that addresses the following system elements:

- A. *Standards alignment.* A local school district must provide for a valid teacher performance evaluation system that is aligned to the state's adopted InTASC standards, as presented in Section II above.
 1. *Model adoption options.* A local school district may elect to (1) adopt a previously existing teacher evaluation model, from either a commercial, school district, or non-profit provider, or (2) develop a locally-designed teacher evaluation model that demonstrates close alignment to the national InTASC standards.
 2. *Additional optional standards.* Local school districts may append additional standards to the InTASC standards for the purposes of designing their local systems; however, local school districts must minimally account for each teacher's overall performance in terms of the InTASC standards for internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring purposes.
 3. *Minimal standards scoring.* Local evaluation models must minimally rate teachers against the four InTASC standards general categories identified in Section II above, for internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring purposes. Local school districts may elect to evaluate teachers in terms of each of the ten separate InTASC standards, or the total number of self-selected standards, voluntarily; however, it is not required for local school districts to expand the number of recorded standards beyond the four InTASC general categories.
- B. *Performance level differentiation.* An adopted or developed teacher evaluation model must specify at least four differentiated performance levels to record the summative rating of each teacher. School districts may adopt either the standard four performance levels or another design that consists of more than four levels, provided that it meets recording specifications listed below.

The state has adopted four standard differentiated performance levels:

Level 1, Non-Proficient: individual teacher performance that does not meet the level of performance specified within a standard or general category, is marked by underperformance or a lack of core competency, has minimally contributed to student growth or closing achievement gaps, and/or requires intensive support to ensure professional growth;

Level 2, Developing Proficiency: individual teacher performance that evidences an emerging level of performance specified within a standard or general category, is

marked by irregular yet promising demonstration of core competency, and/or has demonstrated limited contributions to student growth or closing achievement gaps;

Level 3, Proficient: individual teacher performance that demonstrates consistent competence or proficiency within a standard or general category and/or has contributed to measurable student growth or closing achievement gaps;

Level 4, Exemplary: individual teacher performance that exemplifies commendable or superlative effort, is marked by creativity and unique contributions to the profession and/or has significantly contributed to student growth or closing achievement gaps.

If a local school district adopts a non-standard differentiated performance level design, the local school district must (1) define the relative performance or behavior evidenced at each differentiated level and (2) demonstrate that it can collapse and compile aggregately its teacher performance levels into the state's adopted, standard four levels for external compliance monitoring purposes.

C. *Incorporation of multiple evaluation measures.* An adopted or developed teacher evaluation model must incorporate multiple valid measures, which are clearly related to increasing student academic achievement and school performance, and which are implemented in a consistent and high-quality manner. These multiple measures, including student growth and achievement as a significant factor, include some or all of the following:

1. Required Measure: Student growth and achievement measures that incorporate performance reports from established standardized assessments within subjects and grades where such assessments are conducted, and incorporate appropriate other non-standardized assessments in other non-tested subjects and grades:
 - a. Evaluations for teachers of tested subjects and grades *must include* the North Dakota State Assessment, and may also include any other valid student standardized achievement measures, at a district's discretion, including
 - (1) Measures of Academic Progress;
 - (2) ACT or SAT;
 - (3) WorkKeys;
 - (4) Advanced Placement exams;
 - (5) Benchmark assessments;
 - (6) Classroom- or curriculum-based assessments;
 - (7) Pre- and post-tests; and/or
 - (8) Other district-determined standardized measures.

- b. Evaluations for teachers of untested subjects and grades must include evaluations of student growth and achievement as chosen by individual districts, including locally-developed student achievement measures.

During 2012-13, the NDDPI will develop guidance regarding the manner in which local school districts might incorporate student growth and achievement data as a significant factor in the evaluation of teachers. This research-based guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. This guidance will assist local school districts in incorporating multiple, valid student growth and achievement measures, including the North Dakota State Assessments and other valid standardized achievement measures, or other locally-developed student achievement measures for untested subjects and grades. This guidance will present various methods that provide for an appropriately balanced array of student growth and achievement measures to support each teacher's evaluation. Effective 2013-14, local school districts will voluntarily incorporate those methods that meet the valid and reliable measures set forth within the guidance.

- 2. Required Measure: Supervisory observation which may include any or all of the following optional measures:
 - a. Student learning objectives;
 - b. Classroom observation by a designated school leader, including but not limited to the principal, another school administrator, a mentor teacher, and/or a peer;
 - c. Teacher portfolios or other artifacts of teacher practice;
 - d. Student, parent, teacher, or community perception surveys;
 - e. Evidence of active communications and consultations with parents;
 - f. Self-assessment instruments;
 - g. Teacher goal-setting;
 - h. Analysis of student, class, school, and district student achievement data;
 - i. Videos;
 - j. Focused collaborative discussions;
 - k. Peer feedback or assessment; and/or
 - l. Other indicators.

A district teacher evaluation model shall include minimally a combination of supervisory observations and student growth or achievement data, which will constitute evidence of teachers' effectiveness in impacting actual student growth.

D. *District application process.* In 2012-13 the NDDPI will develop and post an online application process and form that allows local school districts to submit their adopted or locally-designed teacher evaluation model. This online application process provides a simplified means of providing program assurances and narrative that outline a district's administrative procedures. The online application form includes the following elements:

1. Local school district name;
2. Local school district identification number;
3. Name and position of the designated district representative responsible for the submission of the district's evaluation system plan and who will act as primary district contact person;
4. Executive summary of the local school district teacher evaluation model, which provides
 - a. the title of the teacher evaluation model;
 - b. a statement of the model's authorship, including its commercial vendor or locally designed origin;
 - c. vendor identification, if the model is purchased from a commercial vendor source;
 - d. a general description of the evaluation model's design and salient components;
 - e. a general description of the evaluation model's administrative practices; and
 - f. any additional elements that support the evaluation model's overall validity and reliability.
5. Narrative assurance that the local school district
 - a. will evaluate the performance of every teacher against the state's InTASC professional standards;
 - b. provides sufficient evidence that its evaluation model is fully aligned to the InTASC standards; and
 - c. declares whether it will evaluate its teachers against either the four general InTASC categories or the ten specific InTASC standards;
6. (Optional) Narrative description of any additional, voluntary professional standards that a local school district may evaluate teachers against, provided

that the district minimally evaluates against the state's InTASC professional standards;

7. Narrative assurance that the local school district will evaluate teacher performance in terms of the state's four differentiated performance levels, or, if the district adopts a non-standard model with a different performance level metric, the district must (1) define the relative performance or behavior evidenced at each differentiated level, and (2) demonstrate that it can collapse and compile aggregately its teacher performance levels into the state's adopted standard four levels for internal quality assurance and external compliance monitoring purposes.
8. Narrative description of the manner in which the local school district will rate, record, and compile teacher performance against multiple measures, as specified within Section III(C) of the *Guidelines*, which consist minimally of supervisory observation and a significant level of student growth and achievement, including a description of the manner in which tested and non-tested subjects and grades contribute significantly to teachers' overall performance evaluation determinations as described as follows:
 - a. Required Measure: Student growth and achievement measures that incorporate performance reports from established standardized assessments within subjects and grades where such assessments are conducted, and incorporate appropriate other non-standardized assessments in other non-tested subjects and grades:
 - (1) Evaluations for teachers of tested subjects and grades *must include* the North Dakota State Assessment, and may also include any other valid student standardized student achievement measures, at a district's discretion, including
 - (a) Measure of Academic Progress;
 - (b) ACT or SAT;
 - (c) WorkKeys;
 - (d) Advanced Placement exams;
 - (e) Benchmark assessments;
 - (f) Classroom- or curriculum-based assessments;
 - (g) Pre- and post-tests; and/or
 - (h) Other district-determined standardized measures.
 - (2) Evaluations for teachers of untested subjects and grades must include evaluations of student growth and achievement as chosen by individual districts, including locally-developed student achievement measures.

During 2012-13, the NDDPI will develop guidance regarding the manner in which local school districts might incorporate student growth and achievement data as a significant factor in the evaluation of teachers. This research-based guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. This guidance will assist local school districts in incorporating multiple, valid student growth and achievement measures, including the North Dakota State Assessments and other valid standardized achievement measures, or other locally-developed student achievement measures for untested subjects and grades. This guidance will present various methods that provide for an appropriately balanced array of student growth and achievement measures to support each teacher's evaluation. Effective 2013-14, local school districts will voluntarily incorporate those methods that meet the valid and reliable measures set forth within the guidance.

- b. Required Measure: Supervisory observation which may include any or all of the following optional measures:
 - (1) Student learning objectives;
 - (2) Classroom observation by a designated school leader, including but not limited to the principal, another school administrator, a mentor teacher, and/or a peer;
 - (3) Teacher portfolios or other artifacts of teacher practice;
 - (4) Student, parent, teacher, or community perception surveys;
 - (5) Evidence of active communications and consultations with parents;
 - (6) Self-assessment instruments;
 - (7) Teacher goal-setting;
 - (8) Analysis of student, class, school, and district student achievement data;
 - (9) Videos;
 - (10) Focused collaborative discussions;
 - (11) Peer feedback or assessment; and/or
 - (12) Other indicators.

A district teacher evaluation model shall include minimally a combination of supervisory observations and student growth or achievement data, which will constitute evidence of teachers' effectiveness in impacting actual student growth.

9. (Optional) Narrative description of any additional voluntary, valid measures against which the local school district will rate, record and compile teacher performance, and any voluntary, weighted rating percentage for such measures;
10. Narrative description of the general scoring metric to be used to rate, record, and compile teacher performance across specified standards or general categories;
11. Narrative assurance that the local school district will collect and compile aggregated school and district teacher performance rates for internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring;
12. Narrative assurance that, where it is appropriate, teacher evaluation will result in the development of a continuous professional growth plan, which is aligned to the results of a teacher's overall standards-based ratings. Any continuous professional growth plan should specify future professional development or performance remediation steps, as may be required;
13. Narrative description of the local school district's plans to train all staff on the purpose, standards, procedures, and accountability reporting of the district's evaluation system;
14. Narrative description of the process used to ensure that the school district will develop, adopt, pilot, and implement its teacher evaluation and support system with the active involvement of teachers and principals.

Local school districts need only apply once to complete the required information, or as often as the local school district amends the contents of their evaluation system. Local school districts shall submit an initial application no later than April 15, 2015. Local school districts may amend their teacher evaluation system application, including any elements of their system, at any time.

During 2012-13 NDDPI will develop rubrics to aid in the evaluation of quality teacher evaluation models. These rubrics will (a) support local school districts in the selection or development of local teacher evaluation models and (b) guide the NDDPI in evaluating and monitoring the quality of submitted local school district evaluation models. These rubrics and supporting guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

During the Spring of 2013 the NDDPI will begin the ongoing compilation of national and local teacher evaluation models that have been reviewed and approved by the NDDPI based on the state's quality evaluation rubrics. The process of reviewing and approving quality teacher evaluation models will be conducted by NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide advisory committee of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

During 2012-13 the NDDPI will develop an online application to process the submission of local school district teacher evaluation models. All submitted models will undergo a formal review process based on established quality evaluation rubrics against the *Guidelines*.

IV. The Flow of a District Teacher Evaluation System: Local School District Administrative Practices

Local school districts may adopt a timeframe for the scaling up of their teacher evaluation system as specified in Section I above. Local school districts may adopt any administrative practices to implement the development, adoption, piloting, scaling up, and deployment of their evaluation system, consistent with state law. North Dakota Century Code (15.1-15) specifies that every public school district shall conduct an appropriate form and frequency of written teacher evaluations for each public school teacher, based in part on the standing tenure and experience of each teacher. During each of the first three years of employment, a school district will conduct two annual teacher performance evaluations, the first by December 15 and the second by March 15 of each respective year. Subsequently, every teacher will receive an annual performance evaluation by March 15 of each year. Teacher performance evaluations provide for the continual improvement of a teacher's instruction and overall performance and may be used to inform personnel decisions.

Local school districts shall ensure that school district personnel who are responsible for the supervision and evaluation of teachers are sufficiently informed and trained to administer the district's evaluation system, consistent with the *Guidelines* provisions.

The NDDPI will provide training and technical assistance regarding the possible design, development, implementation, recording, compiling, tracking of quality assurances, and compliance monitoring procedures of local teacher evaluation system models to local school district personnel who are responsible for the supervision and evaluation of teachers. The NDDPI will provide a schedule of ongoing teacher evaluation training, including training provided by other associations, which will be communicated to local school district superintendents, principals, and other local school officials.

V. Recording and Compiling District Teacher Evaluation Ratings

A high-quality, uniform, valid, and reliable teacher evaluation system allows a supervisor to apply a common measure across various criteria and to record these measures in a succinct, accessible manner for all teachers, regardless of grade level or subject matter. Teacher evaluation measures must appropriately capture and classify a teacher's performance in a meaningful and timely manner such that a teacher can identify his or her strengths and areas where additional attention might be required. A uniform teacher evaluation system reliably records and compiles teacher evaluation ratings for internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring within local schools and local school districts.

Section II of the *Guidelines* states that each local school district's teacher evaluation model must minimally record teacher performance ratings in terms of the InTASC standards' four general categories:

1. The Learner and Learning
2. Content Knowledge
3. Instructional Practice
4. Professional Responsibility

Section III(B) of the *Guidelines* presents the state's four standard differentiated performance levels, which include:

- Level 1: Non-Proficient;
- Level 2: Developing Proficiency;
- Level 3: Proficient;
- Level 4: Exemplary.

Local school districts shall evaluate and record teacher performance against (1) the four InTASC general categories and (2) the four standard performance levels. Local school districts may elect to evaluate teachers against each of the ten separate InTASC standards or other voluntarily adopted standards, provided that any aggregate recording will occur only against (1) the four InTASC general categories and (2) the four standard performance levels.

Teacher evaluation ratings shall consist of a performance level score for each of the four InTASC general categories and a summative score. Districts may voluntarily adopt averaged summative scores or weighted summative scores that place greater emphasis on specific general categories or standards. Districts may adopt various models of recording teacher performance ratings, as long as ratings can be uniformly recorded and compiled for every school and school district based on the state's recording requirements, for internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring purposes.

The following presents the standard recording metric to be used for the four differentiated performance levels and their corresponding point totals:

- *Level One: Non-Proficient*, one point;
- *Level Two: Developing Proficiency*, two points;
- *Level Three: Proficient*, three points;
- *Level Four: Exemplary*, four points.

During 2012-13 the NDDPI will develop supplementary tools to assist districts in calculating and recording summative evaluation scores.

VI. Quality Assurance of a Valid and Reliable Evaluation System: State Monitoring Efforts

It is the statutory responsibility of the State Superintendent and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) to supervise the provision of elementary and secondary education to all students within North Dakota. It is also the responsibility of the State of North Dakota, as specified within state and federal statutes, including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, to ensure that all students are provided high-quality instruction based on challenging state content and achievement standards and that this instruction is to be provided by highly qualified and effective teachers. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the State to monitor, in a valid and reliable manner, student achievement outcomes and the status of the state's corps of highly qualified teachers.

The State ensures that every teacher is effective, in part, through the state's teacher performance evaluation statutes and the continual professional development of all teachers. North Dakota Century Code (15.1-15) specifies that every public school district shall conduct an appropriate form and frequency of written teacher evaluations for each public school teacher, based in part on the standing tenure and experience of each teacher.

Every local school district stipulates within its teacher evaluation application process that it will develop, adopt, pilot, and implement its teacher evaluation system based on a high-quality, uniform, valid, and reliable evaluation model, consistent with the provisions of the *Guidelines*. The NDDPI will monitor local school district teacher evaluation efforts consistent with North Dakota Administrative Code 67-22-01-01 and the terms of the *Guidelines*. The NDDPI will provide technical assistance to local school districts to assist districts in applying the contents of the *Guidelines* and preparing for the administration of the district's teacher evaluation system.

The NDDPI will conduct periodic monitoring to validate the fidelity of design and implementation of each local school district's teacher evaluation and support system against the provisions of the *Guidelines* and to provide technical assistance to each local school district regarding the overall improvement of its teacher evaluation and support system.

It is the desire of the State Superintendent that the development and dissemination of the *Guidelines* will allow local school districts statewide to begin the process of revising their current teacher evaluation procedures to meet its specifications. A timeline has been adopted that will provide local school districts with sufficient time to study the *Guidelines*, to establish a transitional strategy and timeline for the revision of their local teacher evaluation system, to pilot and eventually implement the provisions of their system, to train principals and other supervisors to conduct evaluations proficiently, and to communicate to stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and the public.

VII. Evaluating Statewide Teacher Evaluation Efforts

The NDDPI will work closely with local school districts, institutions of higher education, regional education associations, the North Dakota School Boards Association (NDSBA), the North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders (NDCEL), the North Dakota Leadership and Educational Administration Development Center (ND LEAD), the North Dakota Education Association (NDEA), REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, and other local, regional, state, and national specialists to conduct ongoing surveys of national, state, and local teacher evaluation systems and practices. As additional evidence-based research and practices become available, the NDDPI will amend the *Guidelines* to incorporate the most current best-practices.

Appendix A

Resources

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (2012). Gathering feedback for teaching: Combining high-quality observations with student surveys and achievement gains. Seattle, WA: Author. Retrieved from http://www.metproject.org/downloads/MET_Gathering_Feedback_Practioner_Brief.pdf

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (2010). Learning about teaching: Initial findings from the Measures of Effective Teaching project. Seattle, WA: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/college-ready-education/Documents/preliminary-findings-research-paper.pdf>

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National Council on Teacher Quality. (2010). A Race to the Top scorecard. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from http://www.nctq.org/p/publications/docs/nctq_race_to_top_scorecard.pdf

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The NDDPI, on behalf of the ESEA Planning Committee and the Teacher and Principal Evaluation Subcommittee, collaborated with the North Central Comprehensive Center at Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) to conduct a survey of research related to teacher and principal evaluation. The Teacher and Principal Evaluation Subcommittee members have reviewed and are incorporating research-based solutions regarding the development of meaningful evaluation systems, based on research reported in the following studies:

1. A Practical Guide to Designing Comprehensive Teacher Evaluation Systems (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, available at: <http://www.tqsource.org/publications/practicalGuideEvalSystems.pdf>);
2. Great Teachers and Leaders: State Considerations on Building Systems of Educator Effectiveness (Reform Support Network, available at: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/great-teachers.doc>);

3. Alternative Measures of Teacher Performance (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, available at: http://www.tqsource.org/pdfs/TQ_Policy-to-PracticeBriefAlternativeMeasures.pdf);
4. Guide to Teacher Evaluation Products (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, available at: <http://www3.learningpt.org/tqsource/GEP/>);
5. Getting It Right: A Comprehensive Guide to Developing and Sustaining Teacher Evaluation and Support Systems (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, available at: http://www.nbpts.org/userfiles/file/NBPTS_Getting-It-Right.pdf); and
6. Labor-Management Collaboration Conference Toolkit (U.S. Department of Education, available at: <http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/lmc-conference-toolkit.pdf>).
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15. Herman, J.L., Heritage, M., & Goldschmidt, P. (2011). Developing and selecting assessments of student growth for use in teacher evaluation systems. Los Angeles, CA: University of California, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Students Testing (CRESST). Retrieved from: http://www.cse.ucla.edu/products/policy/shortTermGrowthMeasures_v6.pdf ;
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17. The New Teacher Project (2010). Teacher Evaluation 2.0. Brooklyn, NY: Author. Retrieved from: <http://tntp.org/files/Teacher-Evaluation-Oct10F.pdf>.

Resources to Consider in choosing professional practice component

1. Milanowski, A. T. (2011, March 18). *Validity research on teacher evaluation systems based on the Framework for Teaching*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA. Retrieved from: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED520519.pdf>

Resources to Consider in choosing student growth measures

1. Measuring Student Growth for Teachers in Non-Tested Grades and Subjects: A Primer (Reform Support Network) available at: http://www.swcompcenter.org/educator_effectiveness2/NTS_PRIMER_FINAL.pdf);
2. Measuring Teachers Contributions to Student Learning Growth for Non-tested Grades and Subjects (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, available at: <http://www.tqsource.org/publications/MeasuringTeachersContributions.pdf>)
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Resources to Consider in Choosing and Combining Multiple Measures

1. Goe, L. (n.d.). *Evaluating Teachers with Multiple Measures*. Washington, DC: American Federation of Teachers. Retrieved from: <http://scee.groupsite.com/uploads/files/x/000/04a/006/Evaluating-Teachers-w-Multiple-Measures?1300833683>
2. State Council for Educator Effectiveness. (2011). Report and recommendations: Submitted to the Colorado State Board of Education pursuant to SB 10-19, April 13, 2011). Denver, CO: Author.

Appendix B

State Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems Subcommittee

Administrators

Name	District	Position	Contact Information
(b)(6)	Grand Forks	MS Principal	(b)(6)
	TGU	K-12 Principal	
	Grand Forks	Supt.	
	Killdeer	HS Principal	
	Dickinson	Supt.	
	West Fargo	Elem. Principal	

Teachers

Name	District	Position	Contact Information
(b)(6)	Grand Forks	MS Teacher	(b)(6)
	Fargo	Elem. Teacher	
	Minot	Elem. Teacher	
	Ashley	HS Teacher	
	Fargo	HS Teacher	
	Northwood	HS Teacher	

At Large

Name	Position	Contact Information
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	Legislator	
	NDLEAD	
	Higher Ed	

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North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines

September 5, 2012

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North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines

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North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines

Preface: A Statement of State Policy

It is the expressed constitutional and statutory responsibility of the State Superintendent and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) to supervise the provision of elementary and secondary education to all students within North Dakota. These duties include the supervision of the establishment and maintenance of schools and the provision of advice and counsel regarding the welfare of all schools and the advancement of statewide efforts to improve the provision of education to all students statewide.

It is also the expressed responsibility of the State of North Dakota, as specified within state and federal statutes, including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, to ensure that all students are provided high-quality instruction based on challenging state content and achievement standards and that this instruction is provided by highly qualified teachers and supervised by effective principals. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the state to report to the public, in a valid and reliable manner, student achievement outcomes and the status of the state's corps of highly qualified educators.

A Focus on Principal Effectiveness

The State of North Dakota ensures that every teacher is highly qualified through the state's teacher licensure provisions and the appropriate course assignment of teachers. State administrative rules require teachers to be supervised by qualified principals, who are charged with clearly defined oversight responsibilities. The state and local school districts place broad supervisory and management responsibilities with principals to ensure the proper administration of their appointed schools. North Dakota Century Code (15.1-15) specifies that every public school district shall conduct an appropriate form and frequency of written evaluations for each public school principal. Principal performance evaluations provide for the continual improvement of a principal's overall performance and may be used to inform personnel decisions.

It has been the historical practice among North Dakota public schools to adopt and administer locally defined principal performance evaluation efforts. This locally determined practice has produced a wide variety of principal performance evaluations, which represent various reference standards, recording metrics, and narrative formats. The variety of evaluation models has not allowed for a common means of uniformly recording or compiling principal evaluation results in terms of common professional standards or performance levels. This has restricted internal district quality assurances and external compliance monitoring efforts.

It has been the standing practice of the NDDPI to advance meaningful educational policies and practices based on broad, statewide dialogue among the state's various educational stakeholders and policymakers. Within this advisory function, the NDDPI has actively sought the meaningful engagement of the state's various stakeholders to study, among other school improvement issues, the need for the state to adopt more uniform standards and guidelines to aid local school districts in the conduct of principal performance evaluations. To advance a collaborative response to this and other education improvement issues, the NDDPI established the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee, which consisted of approximately twenty-five separate stakeholder organizations.

During its deliberations, the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee formed a separate Subcommittee, titled the Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support System Subcommittee (TPESS Subcommittee), to develop and propose for state adoption more uniform principal performance evaluation guidelines. The TPESS Subcommittee's membership consisted of six teachers, six administrators, and four at-large members, including two legislators, a representative from the ND LEAD Center for Educational Leadership, and a higher education representative. The TPESS Subcommittee studied national- and state-focused research, reviewed emerging principal evaluation models from other states, and sought direct technical assistance from the North Central Comprehensive Center at Mid-continent

Research for Education and Learning (McREL), and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. The NDDPI facilitated and provided direct assistance to the effort.

The TPESS Subcommittee conducted its study and drafting work from October 2011 through July 2012. The *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* constitute the product of that effort.

Following the completion of its work, the TPESS Subcommittee forwarded these principal performance evaluation guidelines to the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee, which subsequently reviewed, amended, and ultimately recommended these guidelines for adoption to the State Superintendent.

Our Commitment to our Shared Profession

North Dakotans understand the clear link between a highly effective principal and a student's academic growth and achievement. As a state, we believe that we build the capacity of our principals as a primary way to improve instruction and student achievement. A credible principal evaluation system will foster continuous improvement among all principals and thereby honor and deepen the professional standing of effective education leadership.

I am pleased by the collaborative effort that has developed this meaningful set of principal performance evaluation guidelines. These guidelines will aid local school districts in their efforts to improve the quality, uniformity, validity, and reliability of their unique local principal evaluation models. Each local school district retains its independence to select or adopt their own unique evaluation model, which will now be aligned to the current, nationally respected core principal standards. I am confident that the collaborative effort that has defined these standards and developed these guidelines will carry through to the eventual administration of individual principal evaluations that are meaningful to the improvement of instruction and the advancement of each principal's effective leadership.

I wish to extend my personal gratitude to the members of the TPESS Subcommittee and the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee for their diligence, dedication, and professional attention to the study of research-based practice and policy in the development of these guidelines. I now ask that each public school district, administrator, and principal take these guidelines to heart with the commitment to improve our profession and our individual efforts to raise the quality of education across our state.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Wayne G. Sanstead". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Wayne. G. Sanstead
State Superintendent

North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines

Introduction

This document, titled the *North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines* (hereafter, *Guidelines*) presents overall guidance to local school districts regarding the state's adoption of a uniform, statewide principal performance evaluation system. The provisions of the statewide principal evaluation system become effective with the 2012-13 school year, when local school districts begin to plan a series of phased-in development and implementation activities, as presented within the *Guidelines*. The schedule for developing and implementing a statewide principal evaluation system is specified in Section I.

The *Guidelines* present information important for the adoption and implementation of a district-level principal evaluation system. Sections I-VII of the *Guidelines* present information critical to adopting or developing a uniform statewide system that encourages local expression and flexibility. This information includes the following:

- The defining features of a meaningful principal performance evaluation system;
- The foundational principal professional standards that provide the core criteria for a principal performance evaluation system;
- The means of adopting or developing valid local principal evaluation models that are aligned to the state's principal professional standards;
- The differentiated levels that define principal professional performance;
- Reliable means of recording and compiling differentiated principal performance;
- General administrative practices to efficiently conduct a district-level evaluation system; and
- Longer-term evaluation and research efforts to measure the performance of a district's or the state's evaluation system.

Appendix A to these guidelines lists some of the salient research documents that were used by the TPESS Subcommittee in the development of the guideline's provisions. The TPESS Subcommittee sought to incorporate meaningful, evidenced-based practices into the design and flexibility of these guidelines and the state's overall approach to principal performance evaluation. As the state matures in the adoption and implementation of its emerging statewide principal evaluation system, characterized by local evaluation models, the NDDPI will reference appropriately reviewed research and the experience of local school districts to guide future program improvements.

Processes for evaluating principal leadership performance in K-12 education have received heightened attention in recent years, with policymakers and practitioners focusing efforts on improving teaching and learning through comprehensive evaluation and support systems. Most recently, the U.S. Department of Education, as a part of its *Race to the Top* and *ESEA Flexibility Waiver* programs, underscored teacher effectiveness that emphasized uniform, rigorous, and transparent evaluation systems for teachers and principals.

The *Guidelines* present a road map to guide local school districts in the design and implementation of their own unique evaluation systems. These systems, bound together through commonly recognized professional administrative standards, differentiated performance levels, and general administration protocols, provide for a flexible yet integrated statewide evaluation system.

I. Defining a Meaningful Principal Performance Evaluation System

It is the expressed purpose of the *Guidelines* to provide local school districts with sufficient guidance to develop, adopt, and implement principal evaluation systems that:

- Will be used for continual improvement of school leadership, instruction, and student growth;
- Meaningfully differentiate performance using at least four performance levels;
- Use multiple valid measures in determining principal performance levels, including as a significant factor student growth data for all students. Consideration should be given to tested and non-tested subjects and grades. Additional consideration should be given to measures of professional practice, which may be gathered through multiple formats and sources, such as observations based on rigorous principal performance standards, principal portfolios, and teacher and parent surveys;
- Evaluate principals on a regular basis, as provided in state law;
- Provide clear, timely, and useful feedback, including feedback that identifies needs and guides professional development; and
- Will be used to inform personnel decisions.

A meaningful state evaluation system will provide for foundational standards upon which all principals should be evaluated, regardless of their schools' grade or service configuration. These standards identify those fundamental professional leadership competencies that are required of all principals. These standards allow for and accommodate the unique duties and responsibilities of each individual principal. Section II of the *Guidelines* presents an overview of the state's principal evaluation standards.

A meaningful state evaluation system will define a means for local school districts to adopt existing or to develop locally-designed principal evaluation models, which are uniformly aligned to the state's principal professional standards. These *Guidelines* assist local school districts in specifying their self-selected models and how these models meet standard program requirements. These *Guidelines* specify at least four differentiated performance levels to record the summative rating of each principal. Districts may adopt various methods of determining principal performance ratings. Local school districts are encouraged to use multiple measures that will constitute evidence of principals' effectiveness in fostering a supportive educational culture that positively impacts student growth. Principal evaluation ratings should allow for aggregated recording within the school district for internal quality assurance and external monitoring purposes. These *Guidelines* invite local school districts to exercise broad administrative discretion in the conduct of their evaluation system. These *Guidelines* present a means for local school districts to define and manage an efficient principal evaluation system. Sections III through V of the *Guidelines* presents an overview of these various evaluation model design options and considerations.

A meaningful state evaluation system will ensure that local school districts can provide high-quality, uniform, valid, and reliable evaluation measures that will result in appropriate principal professional improvement plans. A primary aim of any principal evaluation system is to advance continual improvement of leadership competencies that will result in high-quality instruction, a nurturing school environment, and improved student outcomes. Sections VI and VII advance a research-based manner of maintaining a quality principal evaluation system.

A Timeline for the Implementation of a Statewide Principal Evaluation System

It is the expressed intent of the State Superintendent that the development and dissemination of these *Guidelines* allow local school districts statewide to begin the process of revising their current principal evaluation procedures to meet the specifications of the *Guidelines*. A timeline has been adopted that will provide local school districts with sufficient time to study the *Guidelines*, to establish a transitional strategy and timeline for the revision of their local principal evaluation system, to pilot and eventually implement the provisions of their system, and to communicate with and train principals, superintendents, and other stakeholders regarding the purpose, goals, changes, and future direction of the district's evaluation system.

To advance the state's and local school districts' work, the NDDPI has established the following administrative timeline:

- *2011-12 School Year: State Principal Evaluation Guidelines Developed.* The NDDPI develops and adopts, with the consultation of statewide stakeholders, state principal professional standards and principal evaluation guidelines to be reviewed and approved by the State Superintendent.
- *Fall 2012: State Guidelines Approved.* The State Superintendent approves and adopts state principal professional standards and the principal evaluation guidelines for statewide dissemination. Additional support resource guidance, including principal evaluation rubrics and linkage supports for student growth and achievement, will be developed during the 2012-13 academic year, which will become integral support resources to the guidelines.
- *2012-13 School Year. Statewide and District-Level Awareness Training and System Support Guidance Developed.* During 2012-13 the following activities will occur:
 1. The NDDPI disseminates to local school districts the state's approved principal professional standards and principal evaluation guidelines.
 2. The NDDPI, in collaboration with selective statewide education stakeholder organizations, conducts a series of regional training sessions that are designed to introduce educators and the public to the *Guidelines*.
 3. Local school districts begin to study the *Guidelines* and build district-wide capacity in anticipation of forthcoming development and implementation activities.
 4. The NDDPI will develop research-based guidance to aid local school districts to incorporate student growth and achievement data as a significant factor in the evaluation of principals. This support guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and

other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

5. The NDDPI will develop rubrics to aid in the evaluation of quality principal evaluation models. These rubrics will (a) support local school districts in the selection or development of local principal evaluation models and (b) guide the NDDPI in evaluating and monitoring the quality of submitted local school district evaluation models. These rubrics and supporting guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.
 6. The NDDPI will begin the ongoing compilation of national and local principal evaluation models that have been reviewed and approved by the NDDPI based on the state's quality evaluation rubrics. The process of reviewing and approving quality principal evaluation models will be conducted by NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide advisory committee of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.
 7. The NDDPI will develop an online application to process the submission of local school district principal evaluation models. All submitted models will undergo a formal review based on established quality evaluation rubrics against the *Guidelines*.
- *2013-14 School Year: School District Planning and Early-Adopter Pilot Efforts.* During 2013-14 the following activities will occur:
 1. Local school districts begin the process of planning to adopt and/or develop their own principal evaluation models.
 2. The NDDPI solicits interested local school districts to volunteer to be early-adopter pilot sites to begin the process of adopting existing or developing locally-designed principal evaluation models which align to the *Guidelines*.
 3. Early-adopter school districts begin their pilot efforts and provide recommendations to the NDDPI for possible incorporation into future guidance to local school districts.
 4. All local school districts voluntarily incorporate measures of valid and reliable student growth and achievement, as defined by the student growth guidance developed in 2012-13, as a significant factor within the evaluation of principals.
 - *2014-15 School Year: Statewide School District Development and Phased-In Efforts.* During 2014-15 the following activities occur:
 1. With guidance provided by the NDDPI based on feedback from early-adopter pilot sites, local school districts statewide begin the process of adopting existing or developing locally-designed principal evaluation models which align to the *Guidelines*. All local school districts establish a plan for the complete implementation

of the principal evaluation system by the 2015-16 school year. This plan will include the means of selecting an existing model or developing a local model, the training of administrative and supervisory staff, the district's communications plan, and the local school district's efforts to record and compile appropriate principal ratings for internal quality assurance and external monitoring purposes. Local school districts proceed to phase in all or elements of their principal evaluation models.

2. The NDDPI will begin the process of reviewing local principal evaluation models against the state's quality evaluation rubrics developed in 2012-13. Local school district principal evaluation models, which demonstrate fidelity to the *Guidelines* based on the state's quality evaluation rubrics, will be approved. Principal evaluation models which demonstrate deficiencies in their adherence to the *Guidelines* will be returned for additional improvement. The NDDPI will provide direct technical assistance to local school districts whose evaluation models demonstrate deficiencies.
 3. The NDDPI will convene a statewide peer review committee to conduct a high-level review of approved local principal evaluation models to compile best-practice designs and administrative practices. This compilation of exemplary practices will be incorporated into future statewide guidance for the purposes of highlighting those models and practices worthy of replication. This quality assurance review will be conducted by NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide peer review committee of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.
- *2015-16 School Year: Full Implementation.* During 2015-16 the following activities will occur:
 1. All local school districts begin full implementation of their local principal evaluation models.
 2. Local school districts begin the process of collecting and compiling local principal evaluation rating data for local improvement efforts.
 - *2016-17 School Year. Full Implementation and State Monitoring Efforts.* The NDDPI begins the process of monitoring local school districts' principal evaluation models to ensure compliance with the *Guidelines*, including referencing locally collected and secured aggregate principal evaluation rating data. Data are collected and maintained by the local school and school district.

II. The Foundation of a Statewide Principal Evaluation System: Uniform Principal Professional Standards

In 2008, the National Policy Board for Educational Administration updated and released the national *Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for School Leaders*. These ISLLC standards articulated the common principles and foundations of effective school leadership that are necessary to improve student achievement. These standards organize the functions that help define strong, effective school leadership under six general

standards. These standards represent the broad, high-priority themes that education leaders must address in order to promote the success of every student.

The ISLLC standards (refer to the following website, http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2008/Educational_Leadership_Policy_Standards_2008.pdf) identify six general standards. The standards include:

1. Setting a widely shared vision for learning;
2. Developing a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth;
3. Ensuring effective management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment;
4. Collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources;
5. Acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner; and
6. Understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, legal, and cultural contexts.

These six standards provide a schema for the valid evaluation of any principal's core competencies and the reliable means of recording and reporting overall principal performance.

At the recommendation of the TPESS Subcommittee and the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee, the State Superintendent has adopted the *Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for School Leaders* as the operative standards upon which the statewide principal performance evaluation system is to be based. The adoption of these ISLLC standards is effective with the approval of the *Guidelines*.

It is the expressed standing of the TPESS Subcommittee, the State ESEA Reauthorization Planning Committee, and the State Superintendent that the ISLLC standards represent and explicitly present foundational professional principles upon which educational leadership are grounded. The ISLLC standards by design and through practice provide the greatest assurance that teachers will be guided and students will be taught to the highest academic content and achievement standards. The ISLLC standards articulate and foster the actualization of sound professional practices. Each of the specified six standards supports the advancement of educational leadership competencies that result in meaningful student growth and academic achievement.

It is the expressed standing of the State of North Dakota that the state's principal evaluation system is designed to support teachers and to provide for actual student growth and academic achievement. The state's principal evaluation system is valid by the nature of its direct linkage to the ISLLC standards. This linkage ensures that *all* principals, including principals working within different grade organizations, will be evaluated on uniform, professionally sound leadership principles.

The state's principal evaluation system is reliable by the nature of its uniform application to *all* principals, based upon consistently applied procedures and measures, regardless of school organization, standardized assessment applicability or non-applicability, general or specialized instructional focus, geographical location, predominant student demographic setting, or other unique community or educational standing. Any reliable principal evaluation system must provide for the comparable evaluation of all principals, regardless of standing, based on a common, rigorous, academically-centered set of professional leadership standards.

It is the expressed standing of the State of North Dakota that the quality, uniformity, validity, and reliability of the state's principal evaluation system rest upon the foundational leadership-centered principles of the ISLLC standards. ***The state stipulates that this leadership-centered focus provides assurances that principal evaluations conducted within the provisions of the Guidelines will incorporate support for teachers, community engagement, and student growth and achievement as significant measures for all principals.*** As an additional measure of increased reliability, the state includes various multiple measures in the consideration of a principal's effectiveness, including significant consideration for the state's standardized assessments and other objective measures, where appropriate by grade or service organization.

Local school districts will use the ISLLC standards as the criteria for the administration of their local principal evaluation system. Local school districts may append additional standards to the ISLLC standards for the purposes of designing their local systems; however, local school districts must minimally account for each principal's overall performance in terms of the ISLLC standards for recording purposes.

All school districts shall evaluate principals minimally against the six ISLLC standards; however, local school districts may voluntarily elect to evaluate principals against other additional standards. In cases where a local school district chooses to evaluate principals against other additional standards, any aggregate recording must minimally occur within the six ISLLC standards for quality assurance and compliance monitoring purposes.

The *Guidelines* do allow districts to purchase or adopt existing principal evaluation models, provided that these models have been properly aligned to the ISLLC standards and can produce meaningful ratings that can be transformed into the six specified ISLLC standards for district internal quality assurance and external compliance monitoring. The NDDPI will allow, receive, and accommodate proposals from local school districts that provide a means for this internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring to occur.

The NDDPI will monitor progress and support local school districts throughout the development, scaling up, and implementation phases of their principal evaluation systems to ensure that districts provide for valid and reliable principal evaluation models.

III. The Form of a District Principal Evaluation System: Adopting a Valid Evaluation Model Aligned to ISLLC Standards

Effective no later than the 2014-15 school year and supported by guidance provided by the NDDPI based on feedback from early-adopter pilot sites, local school districts statewide must begin the process of adopting existing or developing locally-designed principal evaluation models which align to the state's specified guidelines. By April 15, 2015, all local school districts shall establish and submit to the NDDPI a plan for the complete implementation of the district's principal evaluation system during the 2015-16 school year. This plan will include the means of selecting an existing model or developing a local model, the training of administrative and supervisory staff and principals, the district's communications plan, and the local school district's efforts to record and compile appropriate principal ratings for internal quality assurance and external monitoring purposes.

A local school district shall adopt or develop a principal evaluation system plan that addresses the following system elements:

- A. *Standards alignment.* A local school district must provide for a valid principal performance evaluation system that is aligned to the state's adopted ISLLC standards, as presented in Section II above.
 - 1. *Model adoption options.* A local school district may elect to (1) adopt a previously existing principal evaluation model, from either a commercial, school district, or non-profit provider, or (2) develop a locally-designed principal evaluation model that demonstrates close alignment to the national ISLLC standards.
 - 2. *Additional optional standards.* Local school districts may append additional standards to the ISLLC standards for the purposes of designing their local systems; however, local school districts must minimally account for each principal's overall performance in terms of the ISLLC standards for internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring purposes.
 - 3. *Minimal standards scoring.* Local evaluation models must minimally rate principals against the ISLLC standards identified in Section II above, for internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring purposes. Local school districts may elect voluntarily to evaluate principals in terms of additional standards; however, it is not required for local school districts to expand the number of recorded standards beyond the six ISLLC standards.
- B. *Performance level differentiation.* An adopted or developed principal evaluation model must specify at least four differentiated performance levels to record the summative rating of each principal. School districts may adopt either the standard four performance levels or another design that consists of more than four levels, provided that it meets recording specifications listed below.

The state has adopted four standard differentiated performance levels:

Level 1, Non-Proficient: individual principal performance that does not meet the level of performance specified within a standard or general category, is marked by underperformance or a lack of core competency, has minimally contributed to student growth or closing achievement gaps, and/or requires intensive support to ensure professional growth;

Level 2, Developing Proficiency: individual principal performance that evidences an emerging level of performance specified within a standard or general category, is marked by irregular yet promising demonstration of core competency, and/or has demonstrated limited contributions to student growth or closing achievement gaps;

Level 3, Proficient: individual principal performance that demonstrates consistent competence or proficiency within a standard or general category and/or has contributed to measurable student growth or closing achievement gaps;

Level 4, Exemplary: individual principal performance that exemplifies commendable or superlative effort, is marked by creativity and unique contributions to the

profession and/or has significantly contributed to student growth or closing achievement gaps.

If a local school district adopts a non-standard differentiated performance level design, the local school district must (1) define the relative performance or behavior evidenced at each differentiated level, and (2) demonstrate that it can collapse and compile aggregately its principal performance levels into the state's adopted, standard four levels for external compliance monitoring purposes.

- C. *Incorporation of multiple evaluation measures.* An adopted or developed principal evaluation model must incorporate multiple valid measures, which are clearly related to increasing the standards-based leadership competencies of principals, including to a significant level student growth, academic achievement and school performance. These multiple measures include some or all of the following:
1. Required Measure: Student growth and achievement measures that incorporate performance reports from established standardized assessments within subjects and grades where such assessments are conducted, and incorporate appropriate other non-standardized assessments in other non-tested subjects and grades:
 - a. Evaluations for principals of teachers of tested subjects and grades *must include* the North Dakota State Assessment, and may also include any other valid student standardized achievement measures, at a district's discretion, including
 - (1) Measures of Academic Progress;
 - (2) ACT or SAT;
 - (3) WorkKeys;
 - (4) Advanced Placement exams;
 - (5) Benchmark assessments;
 - (6) Classroom- or curriculum-based assessments;
 - (7) Pre- and post-tests;
 - (8) Comprehensive data analysis of various academic and non-academic measures; and/or
 - (9) Other district-determined standardized measures.
 - b. Evaluations for principals of teachers of untested subjects and grades must include evaluations of student growth and achievement as chosen by individual districts, including locally-developed student achievement measures.

During 2012-13, the NDDPI will develop guidance regarding the manner in which local school districts might incorporate student growth and achievement

data as a significant factor in the evaluation of principals. This research-based guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. This guidance will assist local school districts in incorporating multiple, valid student growth and achievement measures, including the North Dakota State Assessments and other valid standardized achievement measures, or other locally-developed student achievement measures for untested subjects and grades. This guidance will present various methods that provide for an appropriately balanced array of student growth and achievement measures to support each principal's evaluation. Effective 2013-14, local school districts will voluntarily incorporate those methods that meet the valid and reliable measures set forth within the guidance.

2. Required Measure: Supervisory observation which may include any or all of the following optional measures:
 - a. 360-degree surveys of staff;
 - b. Performance observations, including but not limited to the superintendent, other administrators, peers, and/or others;
 - c. School climate or other surveys;
 - d. Weighted summative measures of school and student performance;
 - e. Self-assessment;
 - f. Portfolio compiled by the principal;
 - g. Parent and community outreach efforts, including evidence of communications and consultations with parents;
 - h. School improvement plan;
 - i. Artifacts that address previous goals;
 - j. Meeting agendas; and/or
 - k. Other indicators.

A district principal evaluation model shall include minimally a combination of supervisory observations and student growth or achievement data, which will constitute evidence of principals' effectiveness in impacting actual student growth.

- D. *District application process.* In 2012-13 the NDDPI will develop and post an online application process and form that allows local school districts to submit their adopted or locally-designed principal evaluation model. This online application process provides a simplified means of providing program assurances and narrative that outline a district's administrative procedures. The online application form includes the following elements:

1. Local school district name;
2. Local school district identification number;
3. Name and position of the designated district representative responsible for the submission of the district's evaluation system plan and who will act as primary district contact person;
4. Executive summary of the local school district principal evaluation model, which provides
 - a. the title of the principal evaluation model;
 - b. a statement of the model's authorship, including its commercial vendor or locally designed origin;
 - c. vendor identification, if the model is purchased from a commercial vendor source;
 - d. a general description of the evaluation model's design and salient components;
 - e. a general description of the evaluation model's administrative practices; and
 - f. any additional elements that support the evaluation model's overall validity and reliability.
5. Narrative assurance that the local school district
 - a. will evaluate the performance of every principal against the state's ISLLC professional standards;
 - b. provides sufficient evidence that its evaluation model is fully aligned to the ISLLC standards; and
 - c. declares whether it will evaluate its principals against the six ISLLC standards;
6. (Optional) Narrative description of any additional, voluntary professional standards that a local school district may evaluate principals against, provided that the district minimally evaluates against the state's ISLLC professional standards;
7. Narrative assurance that the local school district will evaluate principals performance in terms of the state's four differentiated performance levels, or, if the district adopts a non-standard model with a different performance level metric, the district must (1) define the relative performance or behavior evidenced at each differentiated level, and (2) demonstrate that it can collapse and compile aggregately its principal performance levels into the

state's adopted standard four levels for internal quality assurance and external compliance monitoring purposes.

8. Narrative description of the manner in which the local school district will rate, record, and compile principal performance against multiple measures, as specified within Section III(C) of the *Guidelines*, which consist minimally of supervisory observation and a significant level of student growth and achievement, including a description of the manner in which tested and non-tested subjects and grades contribute significantly to principals' overall performance evaluation determinations as described as follows:
 - a. Required Measure: Student growth and achievement measures that incorporate performance reports from established standardized assessments within subjects and grades where such assessments are conducted, and incorporate appropriate other non-standardized assessments in other non-tested subjects and grades:
 - (1) Evaluations for principals of teachers of tested subjects and grades *must include* the North Dakota State Assessment, and may also include any other valid student standardized student achievement measures, at a district's discretion, including
 - (a) Measure of Academic Progress;
 - (b) ACT or SAT;
 - (c) WorkKeys;
 - (d) Advanced Placement exams;
 - (e) Benchmark assessments;
 - (f) Classroom- or curriculum-based assessments;
 - (g) Pre- and post-tests;
 - (h) Comprehensive data analysis of various academic and non-academic measures; and/or
 - (i) Other district-determined standardized measures.
 - (2) Evaluations for principals of teachers of untested subjects and grades must include evaluations of student growth and achievement as chosen by individual districts, including locally-developed student achievement measures.

During 2012-13, the NDDPI will develop guidance regarding the manner in which local school districts might incorporate student growth and achievement data as a significant factor in the evaluation of principals. This research-based guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive

Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. This guidance will assist local school districts in incorporating multiple, valid student growth and achievement measures, including the North Dakota State Assessments and other valid standardized achievement measures, or other locally-developed student achievement measures for untested subjects and grades. This guidance will present various methods that provide for an appropriately balanced array of student growth and achievement measures to support each principal's evaluation. Effective 2013-14, local school districts will voluntarily incorporate those methods that meet the valid and reliable measures set forth within the guidance.

- b. Required Measure: Supervisory observation which may include any or all of the following optional measures:
 - (1) 360-degree surveys of staff;
 - (2) Performance observations, including but not limited to the superintendent, other administrators, peers, and/or others;
 - (3) School climate or other surveys;
 - (4) Weighted summative measures of school and student performance;
 - (5) Self-assessment;
 - (6) Portfolio compiled by the principal;
 - (7) Parent and community outreach efforts, including evidence of communications and consultations with parents;
 - (8) School improvement plan;
 - (9) Artifacts that address previous goals;
 - (10) Meeting agendas; and/or
 - (11) Other indicators

A district principal evaluation model shall include minimally a combination of supervisory observations and student growth or achievement data, which will constitute evidence of principals' effectiveness in impacting actual student growth.

- 9. (Optional) Narrative description of any additional voluntary, valid measures against which the local school district will rate, record and compile principal performance, and any voluntary, weighted rating percentage for such measures;

10. Narrative description of the general scoring metric to be used to rate, record, and compile principal performance across specified standards or general categories;
11. Narrative assurance that the local school district will collect and compile aggregated school and district principal performance rates for internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring;
12. Narrative assurance that, where it is appropriate, principal evaluation will result in the development of a continuous professional growth plan, which is aligned to the results of a principal's overall standards-based ratings. Any continuous professional growth plan should specify future professional development or performance remediation steps, as may be required;
13. Narrative description of the local school district's plans to train all staff on the purpose, standards, procedures, and accountability reporting of the district's evaluation system;
14. Narrative description of the process used to ensure that the school district will develop, adopt, pilot, and implement its teacher evaluation and support system with the active involvement of educators.

Local school districts need only apply once to complete the required information, or as often as the local school district amends the contents of their evaluation system. Local school districts shall submit an initial application no later than April 15, 2015. Local school districts may amend their principal evaluation system application, including any elements of their system, at any time.

During 2012-13 NDDPI will develop rubrics to aid in the evaluation of quality principal evaluation models. These rubrics will (a) support local school districts in the selection or development of local principal evaluation models and (b) guide the NDDPI in evaluating and monitoring the quality of submitted local school district evaluation models. These rubrics and supporting guidance will be developed by the NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide task force of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

During the Spring of 2013 the NDDPI will begin the ongoing compilation of national and local principal evaluation models that have been reviewed and approved by the NDDPI based on the state's quality evaluation rubrics. The process of reviewing and approving quality principal evaluation models will be conducted by NDDPI with the assistance of a statewide advisory committee of teachers, principals, administrators, and other state-level stakeholders and with technical assistance provided by REL Central, the North Central Comprehensive Center at McREL, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

During 2012-13 the NDDPI will develop an online application to process the submission of local school district principal evaluation models. All submitted models will undergo a formal review process based on established quality evaluation rubrics against the *Guidelines*.

IV. The Flow of a District Principal Evaluation System: Local School District Administrative Practices

Local school districts may adopt a timeframe for the scaling up of their principal evaluation system as specified in Section I above. Local school districts may adopt any administrative practices to implement the development, adoption, piloting, scaling up, and deployment of their evaluation system, consistent with state law. North Dakota Century Code (15.1-15) specifies that every public school district shall conduct an appropriate form and frequency of written principal evaluations for each public school principal. Every principal will receive an annual performance evaluation by March 15 of each year. Principal performance evaluations provide for the continual improvement of a principal's overall performance and may be used to inform personnel decisions.

Local school districts shall ensure that school district personnel who are responsible for the supervision and evaluation of principals are sufficiently informed and trained to administer the district's evaluation system, consistent with the *Guidelines* provisions.

The NDDPI will provide training and technical assistance regarding the possible design, development, implementation, recording, compiling, tracking of quality assurances, and compliance monitoring procedures of local principal evaluation system models to local school district personnel who are responsible for the supervision and evaluation of principals. The NDDPI will provide a schedule of ongoing principal evaluation training, including training provided by other associations, which will be communicated to local school district superintendents, principals, and other local school officials.

V. Recording and Compiling District Principal Evaluation Ratings

A high-quality, uniform, valid, and reliable principal evaluation system allows a supervisor to apply a common measure across various criteria and to record these measures in a succinct, accessible manner for all principals, regardless of school organization. Principal evaluation measures must appropriately capture and classify a principal's performance in a meaningful and timely manner such that a principal can identify his or her strengths and areas where additional attention might be required. A uniform principal evaluation system reliably records and compiles principal evaluation ratings for internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring within local schools and local school districts.

Section II of the *Guidelines* states that each local school district's principal evaluation model must minimally record principal performance ratings in terms of the ISLLC standards.

Section III(B) of the *Guidelines* presents the state's four standard differentiated performance levels, which include:

- Level 1: Non-Proficient;
- Level 2: Developing Proficiency;
- Level 3: Proficient;
- Level 4: Exemplary.

Local school districts shall evaluate and record principal performance against (1) the six ISLLC standards and (2) the four standard performance levels. Local school districts may elect voluntarily to evaluate principals against additional standards, provided that any aggregate recording will occur only against (1) the six ISLLC standards and (2) the four standard performance levels.

Principal evaluation ratings shall consist of a performance level score for each of the six ISLLC standards and a summative score. Districts may voluntarily adopt averaged summative scores or weighted summative scores that place greater emphasis on specific general categories or standards. Districts may adopt various models of recording principal performance ratings, as long as ratings can be uniformly recorded and compiled for every school and school district based on the state's recording requirements, for internal quality assurance tracking and external compliance monitoring purposes.

The following presents the standard recording metric to be used for the four differentiated performance levels and their corresponding point totals:

- *Level One: Non-Proficient*, one point;
- *Level Two: Developing Proficiency*, two points;
- *Level Three: Proficient*, three points;
- *Level Four: Exemplary*, four points.

During 2012-13, the NDDPI will develop supplementary tools to assist districts in calculating and recording summative evaluation scores.

VI. Quality Assurance of a Valid and Reliable Evaluation System: State Monitoring Efforts

It is the statutory responsibility of the State Superintendent and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) to supervise the provision of elementary and secondary education to all students within North Dakota. It is also the responsibility of the State of North Dakota, as specified within state and federal statutes, including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, to ensure that all students are provided high-quality instruction based on challenging state content and achievement standards and that this instruction is to be provided by highly qualified educators. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the State to monitor, in a valid and reliable manner, student achievement outcomes and the status of the state's corps of highly qualified educators.

The State ensures that every principal is effective, in part, through the state's principal performance evaluation statutes and the continual professional development of all principals. North Dakota Century Code (15.1-15) specifies that every public school district shall conduct an appropriate form and frequency of written principal evaluations for each public school principal.

Every local school district stipulates within its principal evaluation application process that it will develop, adopt, pilot, and implement its principal evaluation system based on a high-quality, uniform, valid, and reliable evaluation model, consistent with the provisions of the *Guidelines*. The NDDPI will monitor local school district principal evaluation efforts consistent with North Dakota Administrative Code 67-22-01-01 and the terms of the *Guidelines*. The NDDPI will provide technical assistance to local school districts to assist districts in understanding the

contents of the *Guidelines* and preparing for the administration of the district's principal evaluation system.

The NDDPI will conduct periodic monitoring to validate the fidelity of design and implementation of each local school district's principal evaluation and support system against the provisions of the *Guidelines* and to provide technical assistance to each local school district regarding the overall improvement of its principal evaluation and support system.

It is the desire of the State Superintendent that the development and dissemination of the *Guidelines* will allow local school districts statewide to begin the process of revising their current principal evaluation procedures to meet its specifications. A timeline has been adopted that will provide local school districts with sufficient time to study the *Guidelines*, to establish a transitional strategy and timeline for the revision of their local principal evaluation system, to pilot and eventually implement the provisions of their system, to train evaluators of principals to conduct evaluations proficiently, and to communicate to stakeholders, including educators, parents, and the public.

VII. Evaluating Statewide Principal Evaluation Efforts

The NDDPI will work closely with local school districts, institutions of higher education, regional education associations, the North Dakota School Boards Association (NDSBA), the North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders (NDCEL), the North Dakota Leadership and Educational Administration Development Center (ND LEAD), the North Dakota Education Association (NDEA), the North Central Comprehensive Center at Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning, the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, and other local, regional, state, and national specialists to conduct ongoing surveys of national, state, and local principal evaluation systems and practices. As additional evidence-based research and practices become available, the NDDPI will amend the *Guidelines* to incorporate the most current best-practices.

Appendix A

Resources

- 1) WestEd's Effective Principals Resources page:
<http://www.wested.org/cs/we/print/docs/we/effective-principals.htm>
- 2) Teacher Quality Center's Online *Practical Guide to Designing Principal Evaluation Systems* (the link is interactive but the site includes a link to download the PDF of the Guide): <http://www.tqsource.org/PracticalGuidePrincipals/>
- 3) Resources from the "Supporting State Efforts to Implement Comprehensive Teacher and Leader Evaluation Systems" Workshop:
<http://www.tqsource.org/workshops/January2012/resources.php>
- 4) Guide to Evaluation Products : <http://resource.tqsource.org/GEP/>
- 5) The Wallace Foundation's Principal Evaluation page:
<http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/school-leadership/principal-evaluation/Pages/default.aspx>
- 6) The Wallace Foundation's Effective Principal Leadership page:
<http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/school-leadership/effective-principal-leadership/Pages/default.aspx>
- 7) Schools Moving Up/Integrated Leadership Development Initiative @ WestEd – Effective Principals resources page and links. Some of these will overlap with Resource #1, above.
<http://www.schoolsmovingup.net/cs/smu/print/htdocs/smu/ideas/principals.htm>
- 8) The Ripple Effect: A Synthesis of Research on Principal Influence to Inform Performance Evaluation Design. (AIR, March 2012)
- 9) Designing Principal Evaluation Systems: Research to Guide Decision Making. (AIR, July 2011)
- 10) How California's Local Education Agencies Evaluate Teachers and Principals (RELWest, 2012)
- 11) Measuring Principal Performance: How Rigorous are Commonly Used Principal Performance Assessment Instruments? (QSL, January 2012)
- 12) 360 Degree Leadership: Evaluating Minnesota Principals. (VIVA, February 2012)

Resources to Consider in Choosing and Combining Multiple Measures

1. Goe, L. (n.d.). *Evaluating Teachers with Multiple Measures*. Washington, DC: American Federation of Teachers. Retrieved from:
<http://scee.groupsie.com/uploads/files/x/000/04a/006/Evaluating-Teachers-w-Multiple-Measures?1300833683>
2. State Council for Educator Effectiveness. (2011). Report and recommendations: Submitted to the Colorado State Board of Education pursuant to SB 10-19, April 13, 2011). Denver, CO: Author.

Appendix B

State Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems Subcommittee

Administrators

Name	District	Position	Contact Information
(b)(6)	Grand Forks	MS Principal	(b)(6)
	TGU	K-12 Principal	
	Grand Forks	Supt.	
	Killdeer	HS Principal	
	Dickinson	Supt.	
	West Fargo	Elem. Principal	

Teachers

Name	District	Position	Contact Information
(b)(6)	Grand Forks	MS Teacher	(b)(6)
	Fargo	Elem. Teacher	
	Minot	Elem. Teacher	
	Ashley	HS Teacher	
	Fargo	HS Teacher	
	Northwood	HS Teacher	

At Large

Name	Position	Contact Information
(b)(6)	Legislator	(b)(6)
	Legislator	
	NDLEAD	
	Higher Ed	

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Attachment 11

Evidence that the SEA has adopted all of the guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems.

Refer to the *Preface: A Statement of Policy* within the following two documents (<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/ESEA/Attachment10.pdf>) which contain the approval and signature of the State Superintendent, indicating the state's formal adoption of all guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems:

- North Dakota Teacher Evaluation Guidelines and the
- North Dakota Principal Evaluation Guidelines